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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A STUDY OF THE RESPONSES OF SUPERIOR AND AVERAGE STUDENTS IN GRADES EIGHT, TEN, AND TWELVE TO A SHORT STORY AND A POEM

by

© WILLIAM THOMAS CORCORAN

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "A Study of the Responses of Superior and Average Students in Grades Eight, Ten, and Twelve to a Short Story and a Poem," submitted by William Thomas Corcoran in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Date Sept. 12, 1978

ABSTRACT

The purposes and objectives of this study were as follows: (1) to describe in detail the responses of superior and average students in grades eight, ten, and twelve to a selected short story and a selected poem; (2) to determine the nature and extent of the changes in responses that occurred across the three grade levels; (3) to identify the extent to which relationships among the variables of response percentages, sex, and ability (as designated by the subjects' teachers) were apparent; (4) to determine the extent to which responses to the selected short story differed from those to the selected poem; (5) to elicit the preferred (or expected) patterns of response when students at all three grade levels encountered short stories and poems in a school setting, and literature in general in an out-of-school setting; and (6) to select for qualitative analysis a set of representative protocols, or response statements, which could be taken to exemplify developmental trends in the pattern of response.

The subjects were 120 teacher-nominated students, evenly divided by sex and ability across the three grade levels, from four secondary schools in Townsville, Queensland, Australia. The selected story was "The Use of Force" by William Carlos Williams, and the selected poem was "Corner" by Ralph Pomeroy. Both the sampled population and the selected literature catered to the study's strong subsidiary interest in making cross-cultural comparisons in the patterns of response.

After reading the short story and the poem in class the subjects wrote delayed, free response papers on each piece of literature.

Each response statement in these 240 papers was then coded into one of five categories (Engagement, Perception, Interpretation, Evaluation, or Miscellaneous) and one of twenty-four subcategories according to the system developed by Purves in his Elements of Writing About a Literary Work. Analysis of variance with repeated measures was used to determine the significance of the differences among category and subcategory mean percentages of response across grade levels, for the story and poem combined, for the story and poem taken separately, for the story as compared with the poem, and for the students distinguished by sex and ability. Additionally, the students completed a Response Preference Questionnaire which allowed for rank order of preferred and rejected subcategories for the school-based study of short stories and poems, and for literature in general encountered in an informal setting.

Differences in the grade-level responses were consistently significant in two response categories. For the story and poem combined, and for the story and poem taken separately, there were significant decreases in Engagement responses between grades eight and twelve, and grades ten and twelve. This movement was paralleled by significant increases in Interpretation responses between grades eight and ten, and between grades eight and twelve. When responses to the story and the poem were directly compared, differences were found only at the finer levels of two subcategories. The poem prompted less retelling than the story, and presented comprehension problems with the language of poetic narrative.

Differences in response to either the short story or the poem by sex were virtually non-existent. On the other hand, the superior students overall responded with significantly less Engagement and

significantly more Evaluation than average students. They were also prone to respond with more perceptional and interpretive statements for the poem as opposed to the short story.

Distinct patterns of expectation and rejection emerged across grade levels and genres when short stories and poems were encountered in a school setting. For short stories, students at grades eight and ten expected to focus on matters of content and structure, while the grade-ten and grade-twelve students consistently ranked literary devices and language as the most important aspects in the study of poems. When any form of literature was encountered in an informal context, all students tended to attach greater importance to matters of personal involvement. In the actual protocols, students generally wrote only for the teacher as informed critic.

The qualitative analysis unearthed developmentally instructive distinctions in the Engagement and Interpretation modes. Student writing could be distinguished by grade and ability levels on continua of egocentrism-detachment, dogmatism-tentativeness, and interpretive inadequacy-interpretive substance. However, the superordinate nature of Evaluation called into question Purves' claim that his categories were non-taxonomic.

Finally, the response patterns of a sample of Australian students placed them closer to American students than either English or New Zealand students, although the study isolated important differences in the task-settings of prior studies which may have produced differences in the pattern of response.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There are constant reminders that for most teachers of English the classroom reading of literature is a central concern. Squire and Applebee (1968), in their study of highly regarded English programs in American secondary schools, found that 52.2% of their classroom observation was devoted to literature, "more than all other aspects of English combined." (41) In a critical appraisal of English electives programs, which he hailed as "the first massive shattering of the structures which have shackled curricula in English" (123), Hillocks (1972) found that 61% of the 1,990 courses listed in the program guides of seventy high schools were literature courses. While it is difficult to argue with Burton (1970), Whitehead (1969) and others who insist that literature should be the focal point of the English teacher's efforts, most of what happens during (or in preparation for) the literature lesson is still outside the limits of research evidence. In reasonably daunting terms Early and Odland (1967) explain the dilemma: "The big questions -- What does literature do to readers? Can literature be taught? -- are hard to answer." (178)

Given the ubiquity of literature as content for teaching, it is virtually impossible to provide a concise description of the uses to which literature is put in the schools. Applebee (1974) and Shayer (1972), writing from American and English perspectives, have provided lengthy historical overviews which serve to highlight a continuing lack of consensus among teachers as well as authorities in English education regarding the objectives of a literature program. For the most part dissensus can be attributed to three, apparently mutually exclusive, foci. First, concentration on the text as an immutable given (Wellek and Warren, 1956) avoids the dangers of solipsism by insisting that the only literary study of any worth is that which uses the "evidence" of the text to sharpen the interpretive powers of the reader. Second, focus on the content of a text as a measure of the worth of its message (Wimsatt, 1967) avoids the "affective fallacy," and leads to structures for literature curricula which embrace the "cultural heritage." Finally, a school of thought which concentrates on the interaction between the respondent to a text and its content, variously labelled transactional criticism, phenomenological criticism, or response-centred criticism, holds that "the ultimate purpose of literary education in the secondary schools is to deepen and extend the responses of young people to literature of many kinds." (Squire, 1971, 92)

Toward a Response-Centred Curriculum

The concern with student response, as opposed, for example, to the structure of the subject matter or the accumulation of knowledge about literature, reflects two dominant views concerning the teaching of English which were polarized at the Dartmouth Conference in 1966. The British view, as first discussed by Dixon (1967), discounted a skills or cultural heritage model for the literature curriculum in favor of a process-oriented approach which emphasized personal growth. In the revised edition of Growth Through English: Set in the Perspective of the Seventies (1975) Dixon saw his own teaching mandate in these terms:

> I need to find many more ways of encouraging that fruitful play with experience and ideas that can emerge when talking and writing move freely between expressive and communicative poles. (This will particularly affect my work in literature.) I want to be more perceptive about the embryonic poems, explanations, etc. that students and I incidentally produce and may want to develop later on, because the experience and ideas have involved us so fully. (136)

In an experience-centred approach to the teaching of literature emphasis falls on extensions involving the active, personal uses of language. The student is encouraged to create his own fictions, or to respond to the emotional and intellectual facets of fiction and poetry in authentic, activity-centred ways, through dramatic improvisation, mime, or translation into other art forms -- film, collage, or the plastic arts.

In contrast to the British view of English as process, Muller (1967) posits that the content of a literature curriculum is palpable and formulable. What is needed is the systematic teaching of subject matter and a stress on the value of conscious understanding of specific literary forms and principles. Whereas the process view of English is primarily concerned with the experiential and affective aspects of literature, the content view reflects an emphasis on knowledge about literature, the structure of its subject matter, and on the cognitive aspects of learning. Mathieson (1975), however, gives the lie to any facile equation of an exclusive discipline orientation on one side of the Atlantic, and an exclusive process orientation on the other. British educators, "suspicious of Leavisite élitism," she says, "are seeking to undermine the status quo by rearrangement of the traditional 'middle class' grammar school curriculum, dismantling literature into themes and projects, and transferring interest from high art to their pupils' personal experience." (140)

In fact, Purves (1975) goes one step further by suggesting three "deep structures" for the literature curriculum both within and among the nations which formed the basis of the IEA study, Literature Education in Ten Countries (1973). Two of these structures, the imitative and the analytic, reflect an emphasis on content, and in their clear resemblance to the "cultural heritage" and "new critical" approaches represent simply a restatement of acknowledged positions. Purves suggests that whether the aim be Arnold's class cohesion or Eliot's cultural cohesion, most national curricula emphasize the conservative function of mandatory exposure to the best exemplars in the nation's tradition. Just as pervasive, whether in the form of analyse textuelle in Belgium, the study of genres in the United States, or the psychological emphases of the Finnish curriculum, is training in the verbalization of an analytic, critical response. The generative curriculum, largely restricted to elementary and lower high school levels, "stresses the individual and his personal growth . . . through unstructured inquiry, focusing on students' experiences with literature, but having no predetermined end in sight beyond the enquiry itself." (144)

In a personal coda to Tradition and Reform in the Teaching of English, Applebee (1974) isolates ten broad and intersecting problems which emerge as the "lessons of history" and therefore as challenges to the English teachers of the future. He maintains that (1) teachers of literature have never successfully resisted the pressure to formulate their subject as a body of knowledge to be imparted; (2) the acknowledged goals of the teaching of literature are in conflict with the emphasis on specific knowledge or content; (3) teachers of English need to make a distinction between knowledge which informs their teaching, and that which should be imparted to the student; (4) there is a need to reconceptualize the "literary heritage" and its implications for patterns of teaching; (5) the teaching of literature is a political act; (6) language skills have been narrowly construed as an independent and functional aspect of the English program; (7) a focus on correcting taste has obscured the need for fostering response; (8) the educative effects of the act of reading need to be defined; (9) goals for the study of English depend upon prior assumptions about the nature and purpose of education; and (10) sequence in the study of English must derive from psychological rather than logical principles. (245-255)

Although consensus has clearly not been reached regarding literature instruction in the decade or so since Dartmouth, many signs point to a gradual favoring of a generative or response-centred model. A gathering chorus of voices from literary scholars and critics is questioning the long entrenched preference for analysis over any kind of emotional response to literature. The stance is exemplified in Wayne Booth's (1965) contention that every teacher should begin "with statements from the students about what they have found in the work, what there is in it that interests or repels them." (7) Questions asked about a work, argues Booth, should be questions about which the student cares. McElroy (1965) believes that the objective study of literature, a reflection of a depersonalized age, should be replaced or balanced by programs for self-discovery. Mandel (1971, 1976) fervently calls for greater efforts that encourage a genuine engagement with literature, and proposes a program for encouraging student response which dispenses with sterile analysis and objectivity. In his acknowledgement that works of literature acquire value only as they are perceived by human minds, Slatoff (1970) captures the essence of the transactional position:

> Insofar as we divorce the study of literature from the experience of reading and view literary works as objects to be analyzed rather than human expressions to be reacted to; insofar as we view them as providing order, pattern, and beauty as opposed to challenge and disturbance; insofar as we favor form over content, objectivity over subjectivity, detachment over involvement, theoretical over real readers; insofar as we worry more about incorrect responses than insufficient ones; insofar as we emphasize the distinctions between literature and life rather than their interpenetrations we reduce the power of literature and protect ourselves from it. (167-168)

Further consideration of the views of selected and influential writers and teachers, among them Rosenblatt (1968), Bleich (1975), Fish (1970), Iser (1972), Lesser (1957), and Holland (1968, 1973, 1975), will be presented in Chapter Two.

One comment by Loban (1970) is interesting in the light of the concentrated and renewed interest in student engagement with literature, and the more eclectic approaches to literary criticism at the college level which Cooper (1971b) saw as creating a more favorable climate for investigations of students' personal response to literature. Echoing what must be a rather standard memory, Loban asserts that "too many teachers have evaded genuine literary response by retreating to their intellectual and theoretical college studies: structure, point of view, genre, archetypes, aesthetic distance." (1087) To date, the Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum of the College English Association has prepared a Position Paper, "What Authorizes the Study of Literature?" (Foulke and Hartman, 1976), which proposes four principles, or points of consensus, as a necessary beginning for discussion of and changes in the teaching of literature in colleges. The first two principles are "negations," the third "a difficult affirmation," and the fourth "a tentative line of inquiry":

> 1. The undergraduate curriculum should not be defined as a mastery of a body of knowledge about literature.
> 2. The nature of literary experience is falsified if the work is conceived of as an object.
> 3. There is promise in recognizing and articulating the multiple contexts which our students actually use in their experience of reading.
> 4. It may be possible to see "resymbolization" or "re-enactment" in the reader as the basis for the intellectual and affective experience of reading and teaching. (477)

The actual documentation of some of the substance and methodologies of courses informed by similar principles, as they have appeared in the British and Australian settings, can be found in Craig and Heinemann's (1976) Experiments in English Teaching: New Work in Higher and Further Education, and in Gill and Crocker's (1977) English in Teacher Education.

Whether and to what extent the influences of such shifts of emphasis in the training institutions have permeated to the schools themselves is problematic. Certainly, newer curriculum materials such as Ginn's Responding series (Purves et al., 1973) and Houghton-Mifflin's Interaction (Moffett et al., 1973) also attempt to foster student-centred learning in English by the use of response-oriented materials. Yet the persistent English electives programs in secondary schools, which provide for non-graded classes in a variety of options of subject matter, seem heavily focused on generic courses, and on the general assumption that students of different ages and abilities can read together the same pieces of literature and evince similar responses. As Hillocks (1972) has pointed out, these generic courses are based on three additional assumptions which bear further scrutiny:

> (1) focus on a specific genre is the most effective means of demonstrating the formal characteristics of the genres;
> (2) appreciation is dependent upon knowledge of the formal characteristics of the genres; and
> (3) a fairly large percentage of high school students are sophisticated enough to benefit from and enjoy attention to formal characteristics at more than a superficial level. (52)

The very point of a response-centred curriculum is a rejection of history, substratum, themes, or genres as the bases for organization or sequence in the study of literature, in favor of a curriculum based on a series of repeated acts -- reading, responding, and elaborating responses. (Purves, 1969; 1972)

Even where themes or topics are used as organizing principles peculiarly suited to the processes of eliciting response, the argument for relevance runs the risk of subordinating a concern with literary form, of literature qua literature, to the uses of literature for psychological and sociological ends. In Tickell's (1972) words there is a need to "ensure that the quality of literature considered does not suffer and . . . to resist the temptation to make the text subordinate to the theme or issue under discussion." (45)

Success with this renewed emphasis on reader response will rest on the evidence of empirical and qualitative changes in the responses of students of different ages to the same works or works of different genres. It seems important, for example, to discover whether examples of the two most commonly taught genres, the short story and the poem, produce different responses from students of different ages or ability. Such information on the variety and depth of responses may suggest a growing sophistication in the recognition and understanding of the interdependence of form and content. Also, if response patterns do vary with differences in age or literary form, the emphases of various instructional procedures can be questioned. In essence, such a study should enable teachers and curriculum planners to make more appropriate decisions regarding approaches, sequences, methods, or literary selections.

The basic need is for more precise, less intuitive information about general and specific response patterns than that provided, for example, in Early's (1960) three stages of literary appreciation: unconscious enjoyment; self-conscious appreciation; and conscious delight. Armed with quantitative and qualitative information on age-specific patterns of response, and variations in such patterns produced by differences in student ability or literary genre, teachers should be provided with an opportunity to help students fully develop not only patterns of preferred response, but also the very capacity to respond.

Problems of Defining Response

The increasing emphasis on a response-oriented curriculum and the need to assemble information on changing patterns of response, preempts certain difficulties with the concept itself. Forehand (1966) suggests that studies of response to literature will inevitably be partially suspect, and bedevilled by the fact that literature is complex and subjective, whereas most methods of measurement are simple and objective. A measure of the complexity and subjectivity of the response process can be gauged from Slatoff's (1970) description of the act of reading. He refers to

> a succession of varied, complex, and rich mental and emotional states usually involving expectancy, tensions and releases, sensations of anxiety, fear, and discovery, sadness, sudden excitements, spurts of hope, warmth or affection, feelings of distance and closeness, and a multitude of motor and sensory responses to the movement, rhythm, and imagery of the work, as well as the variety of activities and responses -- recognition, comparison, classification, judgment, association, reflection -- usually spoken of as intellectual. (6-7)

Slatoff's account of the states and stages of literary response is colorful and accurate, yet hardly amenable to description and measurement. For an educational psychologist, as opposed to a response apologist, "there are other relevant attributes of the response, connoted, for example, by the terms appreciation, attitude, and taste." (Forehand, 1966, 139) Forehand goes on to show how it is possible to measure these attributes, or subsets of them. For example, understanding can be measured by the use of non-directed essays, or by a Literary Discernment Test which assesses the student's grasp of the entertainment value of a passage, the technique or craft of the writer, and the story's themes. Similarly, the semantic differential can be used as a measurement of evaluation, and taste can be analyzed by the use of a Literary Preference Questionnaire. Forehand's techniques provide one means of delimiting, defining, and analyzing the complex act which Slatoff describes.

An alternative attempt at a definition of response is provided by Lundin (1956) who adopts a classical behavioral position with his insistence on the meeting of organism with aesthetic stimulus. According to Lundin, the aesthetic response has four aspects -- creative, appreciative, evaluative, and critical -- all of which interact with the aesthetic object. The focus of Lundin's attention is on the behavioral components of the "appreciative" response. Briefly, these components are the attentional, the perceptual, and the affective. The attentional aspect means primarily that the "entire response equipment of a person may be directed toward the object." (30) The perceptual component involves the fact that "in most aesthetic responses the perception is bound to be a keen and discriminative one, involving reactions to many qualities of the object." (30) The affective acknowledges the fact that the response "will involve many of the nonmoveable parts of the body. Measurements can be taken of changes in breathing, pulse rate, blood pressure or galvanic skin response . . . ." (30) Contrary to the views of philosophers and critics who question the fact that the aesthetic response is measurable, Lundin states that "the aesthetic event appears to be subject to the same principles of behavioral analysis as are other forms of psychological activity. It is natural, observable, and measurable." (30) The question, perhaps, is less whether the response to an aesthetic object can be measured than whether the behavioral definition is most meaningful for teachers of literature.

Purves (1968b) shows an understanding of the problem of definition, with regard to both the restrictiveness of a stimulus-response model and associated implications for instruction: "Psychologically . . . we are less responding to a stimulus in purely behavioral terms than we are imposing a phenomenal field on that stimulus." (834) It is his acknowledgement of the "phenomenal field" that takes cognizance of the reader's experience and lends a dimension to the problem of defining response that is neglected by the behavioral view. Purves goes on to suggest a relationship between the theories of developmental psychology and the processes involved in the reading of literature. Specifically, this entails a "progress from the general or the undifferentiated apprehension through a series of finer discriminations and noting of detail . . . ." (833) Therefore, the focus of instruction should shift from the text itself to the wholistic reactions of individual readers which can be explained only by reference to both the interacting consciousness and its increasingly more complex ability to account for elements in the text which produce individual responses.

In his report as Chairman of the response to literature study group of the Dartmouth Conference, Harding (1968) is rather more specific in delineating what constitutes response. First, he lists three basic guidelines:

> (a) response is not passive but implies active involvement;
> (b) it includes not only immediate response but later effects;
> (c) overt response (verbal, etc.) may indicate very little of the inner response. (11)

In addition, Harding specifies four levels of response: sounds, event, roles, and world. He hypothesizes that these dimensions of response occur in sequence. The first, sound, develops in young children as they listen to stories and respond "to the texture and rhythm of sounds." (13) The next level, event, develops as the child becomes concerned with the pattern of a story: "Stories for very young children embody a pattern of events within this rhythm or form. When a child corrects the storyteller and wants the story word perfect, he is asking for confirmation of the pattern . . . ." (13) Role emerges as "children take up the roles of characters in their stories, or perhaps continue the role playing that the story involved them in." (13) The last level of response, world, develops when the child begins to relate the story to life. That is, the world level occurs when "talk develops to relate and organize elements of the world of that story or to relate the world of that story to the child's own world." (13) Thus, this final level, as well as constituting the most sophisticated plateau of response, has an integrative function since it is at this point that the work achieves a meaning related to the child's experience in general.

In their insistence on a movement from the general to the specific, there are obvious parallels in the accounts offered by Harding and Purves of the developmental emergence of response. For example, Harding's account of the child's response at the sound level is much more general than it is at the role or world levels. The latter (and later developing) categories of response demand a knowledge of specific aspects of the story whereas the earlier category does not. Response at the sound level can be interpreted as occurring at the sensory level; the latter categories demand cognitive activity.

Besides discussing the four levels of response, Harding lists all the various activities that he feels may be subsumed under the term "response":

> The primary centre of the whole activity of reading is some sort of state of our feelings that we can call, for lack of a better word, enjoyment . . . which seems to depend in some fashion on various kinds of activities that lead to understanding. It may also be supported by those typical though maybe not essential activities that form a kind of intelligent scanning and internalized comment (perhaps verbal) on the work as it is being experienced.
>
> Finally, there is the activity that we are stimulated to or prepared for by all our other contacts with a book . . . there is, as it were, a reverberation of the work in our minds, which leads us to return . . . to elements of that experience . . . the partial world of any work of art questions and confirms elements of our existing representational world, making us look for a new order that assimilates both. This, too, is our "response." (23)

What becomes clear from this description of activities is that response includes everything that occurs while reading, as well as any reflections on the work after reading; it includes the emotional as well as the intellectual reaction to the work. This kind of global view of response epitomizes the problems involved in attempting to deal with this concept.

One important conceptual clarification of the qualitative nature of this global act has been provided by Britton (1970, 1977) in his reformulation of some earlier writings by Harding (1937, 1962). Britton draws a distinction between language in the role of participant, and language in the role of spectator. In the broadest terms he suggests that the spectator, freed of the practical and social demands of participating in the actual world, uses that freedom to make judgments and evaluations of the possibilities of experience. When responding to literature, the spectator is able "to evaluate more broadly, to savour feelings, and to contemplate forms -- the formal arrangements of feelings, of events . . . of ideas, and the forms of language. . . in which the whole is expressed." (Britton, 1970, 121) This dual concentration on evaluation and the search for ordered forms or patterns is a necessary part of the development of our individually constructed representations of the world. As Britton (1977) is at pains to point out, the notion of a "detached evaluative response" in the role of a spectator "is a technical inaccuracy; the spectator is detached in the sense that he is not participating in the events he contemplates. He may nevertheless be passionately involved in the memory, the dream, the fiction." (31)

Further, the distinction between participant and spectator role activity is directly related to Britton's development of three major functional categories which mark mature writing. At the centre of Britton's writing model is expressive language, which is language close to the self, and which functions to reveal the speaker, to verbalize his consciousness, and to exhibit his close relationship with the listener or reader. Since expressive language, with its insistence on shared contexts, is seen as the matrix out of which more specialized uses of language develop, Britton makes no distinction between participant and spectator roles within the expressive function. However, in what he acknowledges as an inaccurate linear representation, Britton equates language in the other two modes, the transactional and the poetic, with participant and spectator roles. The distinction between transactional and poetic language is that which separates utilitarian utterances, directed to an end outside themselves, and self-sufficient statements which direct attention to themselves only, emphasizing in the process internal pattern and form.

Ultimately, Britton's (1977) explanations of the two roles (participant/spectator) and the functional continuum (transactional-expressive-poetic) provide valuable insights into the creative and re-creative components of response to literature:

> When we read a piece of transactional writing, we "contextualize" it or make its meanings our own, in a piecemeal fashion. We take what fragments interest us, reject others because they are over familiar, or because we find them unacceptable or incomprehensible; and we forge new connections for ourselves between and around the fragments we take. But the writer of a poetic utterance must resist such piecemeal contextualization by his reader. His verbal object is a thing deliberately isolated from the rest of reality, his own or the reader's. The appropriate response for a reader is to reconstruct the verbal object in the terms in which it is presented -- in accordance, that is, with the complexity of its internal organization; and having done that to his satisfaction, to relate it as a total construct to his own values and opinions . . . . This process we have called "global contextualization." Of course, as readers, we may learn incidentally a great deal about the world from fiction, and this will be a process of piecemeal contextualization. However, such incidental responses are to be distinguished from what is essential to the conventions of poetic writing and to the main purpose in hand. (35-36)

It is clear that Britton's insistence on the importance of "global contextualization" once again argues a case for the wholistic nature of response. Yet his concern is with the potency of spectator role experiences operating within the framework of necessarily personal systems of construing as an instrument of socialization.

Applebee (1973), therefore, is able to build on the theoretical framework provided by Harding and Britton to chart the ways in which response develops from quite early years to the age of seventeen. He traces developmental changes in spectator-role discourse and attributes them to (1) the changing relations between spectator role experience and life experience, (2) progressive acquisition of spectator role conventions, and (3) the complexity of the experiences, both personal and literary, over which the individual has control. (346) The development of narrative form, for example, closely parallels the sequence of stages in Vygotsky's (1962) account of concept development. For the two to five-year-olds, "two processes, centering and chaining, underlie these stages and seem generalizable to more sophisticated literary forms." (2) It is only with the onset of adolescence, and with it Piaget's formal operational modes of thought, that the spectator role changes from a view of the world, to one that offers a possible view of alternative worlds. Again, response is accretional: "The experience of the work is no less patterned simply because the young child does not recognize the pattern as yet; it is only through repeated experience with such patterns that stable expectations can eventually build up." (347)

The explanatory power of the descriptions of response offered by Purves, Harding, Britton, and Applebee is set in perspective by contrasting the attempts of some scholars to subsume response under the rubric of literary "appreciation." For example, Pooley (1935) defines appreciation rather simply as "the emotional responses which arise from basic recognitions, enhanced by an apprehension of the means by which they are aroused." (638) Growth in appreciation occurs when, in addition to arousing the primary emotional responses, there is "the gradual growth of secondary responses arising from the intellectual apprehension of the technical skill of the artist and the content of the selection." (629-630) While the subject of "appreciation" and "response" studies appears to be the same, namely the changes in the interaction of the work and the reader as the reader matures, the proponents of appreciation seem bent on ultimately divorcing affective and cognitive structures. Moreover, most appreciation studies, for example those of Speer (1929), Burton (1952), and Eppel (1950), seem concerned more with the criterion of literary merit, as matched against the judgment of experts, than with the nature of the complex act of response.

Statement of the Problem

Thus, while a researcher may acknowledge the primacy of reader response, the object of his study will remain protean and elusive until he specifies a particular aspect of the global act of response on which to focus. Following Purves (1968; 1971), this study largely restricts itself to the tangible elements of the "expressed written response." In the process, to use Purves' (1968) metaphor, the expressed response will remain "like an iceberg: only a small part will become apparent to the teacher or even to the student himself." (xiii) Also, as Squire points out in his introduction to The Elements of Writing About a Literary Work it will be recognized that:

> The elements of writing about literature are not necessarily identical with the elements of response. Reactions secured through written protocols may reflect more what students have been taught to think and feel about literature, rather than what they actually think and feel. (vi)

Such considerations, however, are integral to the design of this study as it attempts to chart the response patterns of a sample of Australian students at three age levels and two ability levels to a short story and a poem.

The major aim of the study is to add to the considerable, yet often contradictory, evidence of cross-sectional changes in the patterns of response as groups of students in a particular cultural setting respond to examples of literature from two genres. In the process, the relative effects of maturation, instructional procedures, and the context of response were approached in a number of ways. First, teachers were involved in the nomination of superior and average students from each of three grade levels. They also provided information on specific teaching approaches to the short story and the poem, on evaluative procedures, and on their private characterizations of the perceptive adolescent reader. In addition, the students were invited to address their writing to an audience which included the peer group as well as the teacher, and to provide supplementary information on their expectations of response patterns relevant to short stories and poems met in a school setting, as well as to literature in general encountered in an out-of-school context.

After the students had written free responses to the short story and the poem, their protocols were coded according to the system of content analysis developed by Purves and Rippere (1968). Each statement was coded into one of five major categories of response after allocation to one of twenty-four subcategories. The five major categories are: Engagement (statements about the reader's personal involvement); Perception (statements about the work as an object separate from the reader); Interpretation (statements concerned with the meaning of the work); Evaluation (statements judging the worth or otherwise of the work); and Miscellaneous (statements not immediately accommodated in any of the other categories.)

In sum, then, the purposes and objectives of the present study were as follows: (1) to describe in detail the responses of superior and average students in grades eight, ten, and twelve to a short story and a poem; (2) to determine the kind and extent of the changes in the responses that occurred at different grade levels; (3) to identify the extent to which relationships among the variables of response percentages, sex, and ability were apparent; (4) to determine the extent to which responses to a selected short story differed from those to a selected poem; (5) to examine the effects of a sense of audience evident in student writing, and of the influence of context in students' ratings of important and unimportant questions when short stories and poems were encountered in a school setting, and literature in general was encountered in an informal setting; and (6) to select for qualitative analysis a set of representative protocols, or combinations of response statements, which could be taken to exemplify developmental trends in the pattern of response, especially as these trends appeared also to relate to the effects of instructional practice in the cultural setting of Australian schools.

Through the sequent stages of quantitative and qualitative analysis, answers were sought to these more specific questions , for which relevant hypotheses and procedures are presented in Chapter Three:

1. What are the patterns of response made by all students to the story and poem combined?
2. Are there differences across grade levels in the patterns of response made by all students to the story and poem combined?
3. Are there differences across grade levels in the patterns of response made by all groups of students to the story and the poem taken separately?
4. Are there differences in the patterns of response made by all groups of students to the story as compared with the poem?
5. What are the preferred (or expected) patterns of response when students at all grade levels encounter short stories and poems in a school setting, and literature in general in an out-of-school setting?
6. Are there differences in the response patterns of the groups of male and female students to the story and poem combined, or to the story and poem taken separately -- across grade levels or overall?
7. Are there differences in the response patterns of the groups of superior and average students to the story and poem combined, or to the story and poem taken separately -- across grade levels or overall?
8. Are there any discernible combinations of response patterns which are cross-culturally informative in the writings of a sample of Australian students?
9. What qualitative differences are evident in the expressions of engagement, perception, interpretation, and evaluation provided by average and superior students at each of the three grade levels?
10. Does the provision of an audience including the peer group as well as the teacher produce notable features in the content or language mode of students' written responses to literature?

Summary

This introductory chapter has presented a brief statement of some of the recent developments in English education as they relate to literary study. The gradual emphasis, at all levels of the curriculum, on a response-oriented approach has been charted in the context of a consideration of the problems associated with defining the concept of response itself. In addition, the need for more studies of literary response has been established and the problem for this study has been delineated. Chapter Two summarizes relevant research in five directly related areas: (1) the writings of literary scholars; (2) content analyses of response to literature; (3) responses of students of different ages or ability levels; (4) studies employing different types of stories or poems; and (5) the effects of context on response.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

Much of the growing body of research into the response of readers to literature has been progressively reviewed by Squire (1964), Early and Odland (1967), Cooper (1971a, 1976b), Purves and Beach (1972), D'Arcy (1973), and Applebee (1977). The vastness of the field is reflected in Cooper's (1976b) positing of at least eleven foci in the studies he lists. In the following discussion attention will be concentrated on five areas directly related to the present study: (1) the writings of literary scholars; (2) content analyses of response to literature; (3) responses of students of different ages or ability levels; (4) studies employing different types of stories or poems; and (5) the effects of context on response. It will soon become clear that these boundaries, while they provide a useful framework for discussion, are inevitably illusory. The secondary findings of many studies, especially those employing multiple variables, will have obvious relevance across two or three of the broad areas delimited for discussion.

The Writings of Literary Scholars

Theoreticians and scholars who undertake to describe the process of literary response are unanimous in acknowledging its complexity. For Purves and Beach (1972) any complete account must consider the interaction of three variables:

> the reader: an individual's concepts, attitudes, and experiences, perceptual abilities, and emotional and psychological state;
>
> the literary work: a verbal construct dealing with an experience and portrayed by a voice which reveals an attitude towards its subject matter and possible audience; and
>
> the situation of reading: whether assigned or not, whether in a classroom or not, whence and by whom stimulated, and for what purpose undertaken. (180-181)

The writers, who can be given only selective consideration here, differ in their assumptions, terminology, and alignment with various "schools" of criticism or response. However, they are unanimous in rejecting accounts of the literary experience which focus on the work itself, on the "text," at the expense of the reader and his interaction with the work.

For over thirty years, since the original publication of Literature as Exploration in 1938, Louise Rosenblatt has insisted on the absolute necessity of examining individual responses to individual works. Over this period she has attempted to clarify her perception of the differences between aesthetic and non-aesthetic reading experiences by describing the former through a series of active metaphors. The original notion of "exploration," via the typing of the "poem as event" in 1964, culminated, in 1969, in a "transactional theory of reading." The essential premise has remained the same:

> Through the medium of words, the text brings into the reader's consciousness certain concepts, certain sensuous experiences, certain images of things, people, actions, scenes. The special meanings and, more particularly the submerged associations that these words and images have for the individual reader will largely determine what the work communicates to him. The reader brings to the work personality traits, memories of past events, present needs and preoccupations, a particular mood of the moment, and a particular physical condition. These and many other elements in a never-to-be duplicated combination determine his response to the peculiar contribution of the text. (Rosenblatt, 1968, 30-31)

In her most direct attack on the New Critics, and their assumption of the objectivity of a literary work, Rosenblatt (1969) points to the need "to eliminate a widespread semantic confusion, the tendency to use the words poem and text interchangeably." (34) According to Rosenblatt the artistic creation (text) becomes an aesthetic object (poem) only through the active re-creation of a reader. She disdains I.A. Richards' (1929) notion of mnemonic irrelevances, and in the process enters the classic debate in hermeneutics of how a reader may understand an author better than the author himself. (Meuller-Volmer, 1972)

Rosenblatt is concerned that a reader's personal response to a work at least be given an opportunity to crystallize; many teaching situations do not permit this but rather divert the attention of the student to some formula or assignment perhaps far removed from his own feelings and understanding. She believes that the reader "can begin to achieve a sound approach to literature only when he reflects upon his response to it, when he attempts to understand what in the work and in himself produced that reaction, and when he thoughtfully goes on to modify, reject, or accept it." (Rosenblatt, 1968, 76)

In presenting his case for the personal dimensions of literary response, Slatoff (1970) attacks the spurious precision of formalistic approaches to the literary experience. The analytic-historic tradition has set up a series of "polarities and dichotomies which have seriously limited our thinking and observation: objective-subjective, clear thinking-emotional involvement, judgment-sympathy, impersonal-personal, accurate-impressionistic, and knowledge-appreciation." (36) Anything that smacks of subjectivity in each of these polarities is wrongly branded irresponsible, self-indulgent, and solipsistic. While most theories of perception acknowledge the interdependence of object and beholder, "works of literature [in particular] have scarcely any important qualities apart from those that take shape in minds." (23)

Slatoff believes that the complexity of emotional responses is devalued by the simple terms or single continua generally used in describing them. Involvement, for example, is a multi-faceted activity which allows distinctions to be drawn between projection and empathy, sympathy and empathy, fascination and a condition of real concern. If used loosely, the term "fails . . . to distinguish between an experience which simply arouses one's emotions, that is, in which one responds emotionally, and an experience entailing some kind of personal participation in the story or characters." (40) Detachment and involvement are not polar opposites for they often overlap in the experience of a reader who is "at once a participant in the action and a detached spectator of it." (39) Distinctions between the two terms fail to allow for the fact that "many important kinds of involvement require, and even derive from, a sense of self and a recognition that the other is not-me." (49) Inevitably, the thrust of Slatoff's argument comes again to the false separation of cognition and affect. Although thought and feeling can each occur without the other, most literature "is designed to engage, and does engage, both mind and emotion and does engender responses in which thought and feeling are particularly inseparable." (53)

James's image of the ineffably plastic reader seems entirely inadequate for Slatoff because "literary works, however firmly designed, can exert only limited and inexact control and guidance over even the most docile reader." (60) Individual readers differ enormously in their capacity to respond to image, metaphor, and symbol. In addition, critics are curiously silent about the whole panoply of experiences, memories, attitudes, values, and beliefs which inevitably trigger or numb the individual's response to a literary work. What is needed, therefore, is not a retreat to lax impressionism, or a conversion of the study of literature into moral instruction or psychotherapy, but the release of a fruitful tension which acknowledges that the "locus of the event under examination is neither the reader nor the text alone but the intersection or communion of the two." (186)

Iser (1972) also insists that it is the convergence of text and reader that brings the literary work into existence. This convergence, however, can never be precisely pinpointed, but must always remain "virtual, as it is not to be identified with the reality of the text or with the individual disposition of the reader." (279). His phenomenological account of the reading process is characterized by notions of "indeterminacy" and "dynamism." The indeterminacy of the artistic text (that created by the author) is the result of the interaction of sequent sentences in the imagination of the reader over time.

The sentences in literary texts interact in such a way as to deny "the confirmative effect" which we "implicitly demand of expository texts." (283) Any pattern of expectation set up by any one sentence is drastically modified by succeeding sentences. Thus, the reader becomes involved in a process of anticipation and retrospection where the indeterminacy of the text demands that he draw on his own experience to fill in the gaps. Therefore,

> . . . we have the apparently paradoxical situation in which the reader is forced to reveal aspects of himself in order to experience a reality which is different from his own. The impact this reality makes on him will depend largely on the extent to which he himself actively provides the unwritten part of the text, and yet in supplying all the missing links he must think in terms of experiences different from his own; indeed it is only by leaving the familiar world of his own experience that the reader can truly participate in the adventure the literary text offers him. (286-287)

With every reading and re-reading there is a search to relate the different aspects of the text into some consistent pattern. Yet this gestalt, which arises from the reader's expectations, is further thwarted by the "illusions" created in the reader's mind by the text: "The polysemantic nature of the text and the illusion-making of the reader are opposed factors." (290) To the extent that the reader seeks a consistent pattern in the text, the text resists final integration by the reader. This gives rise to a further interplay between deduction -- the reader's attempt to formulate something that is unformulated in the text -- and induction -- the search for configurative meaning based on information supplied by the text. Ultimately, with each re-reading, further illusions will be thrown up by the text and by the data of the reader's expanding experiences, so that no final balance between deduction and induction can be achieved.

The point of Iser's specialized analysis is to stress the dialectical structure of reading, and its function in the creation of identity: "As the literary text involves the reader in the formation of illusion and the simultaneous formation of the means whereby the illusion is punctured, reading reflects the process by which we gain experience." (295) One of the strongest "illusions" is the author's stratagem of identification. To understand this phenomenon properly it is necessary to see text and reader not as object and subject, but as an encounter between "the alien 'me' and the real, virtual 'me' -- which are never completely cut off from each other." (298) The process of identification, far from being a simple matter of seeing an approximation of the self in an alien setting, involves recreating the self in terms which had previously eluded the conscious.

Whereas Iser employs the notion of sequent sentences to account for the dynamics of reader-text interaction, Fish (1970) sees value in slowing down the reading process even more dramatically. His method, which acknowledges the temporal flow of the reading experience, involves "an analysis of the developing responses of the reader in relation to the words as they succeed one another in time." (126-127) Again, the "actively mediating presenoe" of the reader is acknowledged by the substitution of a more operational question -- What does this word or sentence do? -- in place of the more text-bound formulation -- What does this word or sentence mean? It would appear, however, that despite Fish's useful insistence on the kinetics of the reading act, the unit of discourse on which he focuses (the word) is rather too precise to do justice to the complexity of the process he describes. On another level, that of accounting for different interpretations of a text, he does offer an obvious but salutary reminder: "Most literary quarrels are not disagreements about response, but about a response to a response." (147)

One of the more influential psychoanalytic accounts of the nature of the reading process is provided by Lesser in his *Fiction and Unconscious* (1967). According to Lesser, we read "because we are beset by anxieties, guilt feelings, and ungratified needs." (78) Young readers, however, are less demanding of qualities within literature which lead to the relaxation of the ego. Questions relating to the validity of psychological realities, to the internal consistencies of the work, or to the general veracity of art assume increasing importance only with increasing age.

Lesser attempts a distinction between those aspects of response to fiction which are conscious, and those which are unconscious. For example, the conscious mind can accommodate such features as the development of a narrative and its manifest meaning. It can also judge the story's honesty, its relevance for the reader, the technique with which it is worked out, and its relation to matters of extrinsic criticism such as the author's canon, the typology of the work, and its place in tradition. It is important for the conscious mind to be kept occupied with these activities, for "if it is not it is likely to penetrate to meanings and appeals which would arouse disquiet or even revulsion, if brought to light." (196)

While the unconscious processes of the mind are far more complicated and lacking in coherence, Lesser proposes a set of three interlocking stances. The first of these, "a part of our 'spectator' reaction to fiction," concerns itself basically with "perception and understanding." (197) Here the unconscious "ferrets out connections, draws inferences, and establishes connections; it synthesizes its observation." (199) At the same time, two more active processes are at work. On one level "we unconsciously participate in the stories we read," on another "we compose stories structured upon the ones we read." (197) The participating process, dependent as it is on individual needs and drives, will vary in the intensity of absorption that each reader feels for different scenes and roles. It is the third process, which Lesser calls "analogizing," which firmly established the validity of the personal experiences we bring to each act of reading. Perhaps more frequently we will end in "composing fantasies based on our wishes and fears rather than upon our experience." (203)

Like most of the writers under discussion here, Lesser believes that critics have overlooked significant areas of response by concentrating on the cognitive level of response, on conscious reactions. His discussion again attempts to redress an imbalance:

> Everything we know and feel about fiction suggests that understanding is not its sole objective. If it were, fiction would probably be less interested in particulars, it would certainly be more concerned with generalizations than in fact it is . . . . The basic characteristics of fiction suggest that it usually wants us not simply to see and understand but to participate in the events it sets before us. It offers us not simply a spectacle but an experience. (238)

Certainly the most extensive discussion and application of a theory of literary response based upon psychoanalytic concepts is that provided by Holland (1968, 1973, 1975a, 1975b, 1976). In his original formulation, The Dynamics of Literary Response (1968), Holland proposes two kinds of reading which correspond to the conscious and unconscious activities of the mind -- intellecting and introjecting. The reader, then, has "two different relations to the text. On the conscious level, he is actively engaged in perceiving it and thinking his perceptions into meaning. Unconsciously, the text presents him with fantasies and defenses in his own mind." (62) If he willingly suspends disbelief -- which involves two conscious expectations: that the text will give him pleasure, and that it will not require him to act on the external world -- he may experience the literary work by introjecting it. Holland summarizes the theory in this way:

> Put in its briefest form, the theory says that literature is an introjected transformation. The literary text provides us with a fantasy which we introject, experiencing it as though it were our own, supplying our own associations to it. The literary work manages this transformation in two broad ways: by shaping it with formal devices which operate roughly like defenses; by transforming the fantasy toward ego-acceptable meanings -- something like sublimation. The pleasure we experience is the feeling of having a fantasy of our own and our own associations to it managed and controlled but at the same time allowed a limited expression and quantification. (311-312)

It is not entirely accurate to say that we lose ourselves in a literary work. Introjecting the work means "letting it form a core . . . within us which is the literary work, but within a rind of our ordinary selves." (87) The popular notion of the reader's being absorbed "reverses the true state of affairs. We absorb it, making the literary work a subsystem within us." (89) This absorption tends to occur more often with detective stories, science fiction, and "entertainments" rather than with literary masterpieces: "If we are dealing with a masterpiece, we are likely to respond more at the conscious level of meaning and significance, less at the primitive level of fusion and introjection." (92)

Along with the other writers being considered here, Holland devotes considerable attention to the concept of identification, and the related issue of character realism. The history of criticism has brought us to an impasse, with the logic of the New Critics making it seem bad sense to treat literary characters as real people. However, drawing on the evidence of experimental psychology, Holland argues that readers and playgoers recreate characters from the incidents in a plot or lines in the play, give them a personal sense of reality, and relate themselves to them. In the final analysis, according to Holland,

> . . . our so called "identification" with a literary character is actually a complicated mixture of projection and introjection, of taking in from the character certain drives and defenses that are really objectively "out there" and of putting into him feelings that are really our own, "in here." (278)

The critical dilemma about the characters' reality disappears when we acknowledge that the great achievement of the artist is his transmutation of the reader into creator. The characters are real or not real to the extent that we endow them with our wishes and defenses.

Holland admits the crude and imperfect state of our present understanding of the nature of "affect." Symptoms of the lack of progress in understanding emotions, other than knowing that accompanying physiological and thought processes do not represent the full experience, include a limited descriptive terminology, and a general paucity of studies where readers have been asked to elaborate their feelings on request. Therefore the experimental studies, Poems in Persons (1973) and 5 Readers Reading (1975), flesh out the model through the descriptive terms provided by psychoanalytic ego psychology and the empirical evidence of the thousands of pages of transcript provided by his "readers reading."

Drawing heavily on the work of Heinz Lichtenstein (1961), Holland maintains that when an individual responds to a work of literature he does so in a manner consistent with a unique identity theme, or personal style. The evidence of the clinical case studies suggests that the process of response to literature operates consistently within the constraints of this identity theme, personal style, myth, or life-style. The completed theory embraces four principles that Holland sees governing the way a reader re-creates a literary work:

> First, there is one general overarching law: style creates itself. The reader tries, as he proceeds through the work, to compose from it a literary experience in his particular life-style. In particular, line by line and episode by episode, he responds positively to those elements that, at any given point in the work, he perceives as acting out what he would characteristically expect in another being in such circumstances. What cannot be perceived as acting out his expectations he responds negatively or remains indifferent to.
>
> To respond positively, to gratify expectations this way, a reader must be able to create his characteristic modes of adaptation and defense from the words he is reading. This is the second principle, and the most exacting: defense must match defense. For a reader to take pleasure from a reading, he has to protect that pleasure. He must re-create for himself from the text rather precisely all or parts of the structures by which he wards off anxiety in real life.
>
> The reader can very freely shape for himself from the literary materials he has admitted a fantasy that gives him pleasure, and this is the third principle. He projects into the work a fantasy that yields the pleasure he characteristically seeks.
>
> A fourth principle . . . . The reader "makes sense" of the text; he transforms the fantasy he has projected into it by means of the defensive structures he has created from it to arrive at an intellectual or moral "point" in what he has read. (1973, 77)

With these four principles recognized, the artist still exerts control over the reader's responses by creating a structure which must be restructured with each encounter with the work. Nor are we bound by any implication that each reading has equal merit, for objective criteria (completeness, unity, or directness) still apply. In Holland's analysis "objective reality" and "pure experience," dependent as they are on the force of the identity theme, "are . . . only useful fictions, vanishing points we approach but never meet." (1975a, 2)

While David Bleich (1969, 1971, 1975a, 1975b) finds considerable explanatory power in Holland's fantasy-defense conceptualization of response, he sees Holland at least partially bound by the New Critical insistence on the objectivity of the text. In what is probably the most thoroughgoing commitment to the subjective paradigm, Bleich

(1975a) asserts that "the essence of a symbolic work is not in its visible sensory structure or in its manifest semantic load but in its subjective re-creation by a reader and in his public presentation of that creation." (21) Works of literary art, Bleich alleges, exist entirely as a function of the mind and history of the perceiver. There may, however, be considerable virtue in biographical criticism, either for the psychological light it sheds on the development of a personal writing style, or for the reduction of narcissism in reading whereby the reader engages an author as person rather than authority.

Bleich, like Rosenblatt, is rather more concerned with developing a curriculum which rests on the subjective bases of literary experience, than with offering an extensive account of the dynamics of reading. His course of study proposes four incremental phases which work outwards from an examination of the uniqueness of personal feelings towards a developing notion of the sharability or dialectic of communal interpretation. During the first phase, "Thoughts and Feelings," the aim in class is "to understand how people respond emotionally and then translate these responses into thoughts and judgments." (1975a, 15) Armed with this knowledge, the class is ready for the second phase, "Feeling about Literature," where the focus shifts to an analysis of "the patterns of perceptual emphasis in each reader and to suggest how these patterns will be relevant in understanding the reader's larger patterns of response and judgment." (21) Through an analysis of protocols marked by perception, affective responses, and associative responses, Bleich indicates how the classroom dynamic can shift from the text itself to a diversity of personal readings of the text. In the third and fourth phases, "Deciding on Literary Importance" and

"Interpretation as a Communal Act," Bleich shows that, at an advanced level affect and judgment "are both part of a single and more general process of response, which begins in complete subjectivity and is then transformed into judgments that appear to be objective." (49)

Content Analyses of Response to Literature

The pioneering effort in the careful study of the responses of students to literature is Richards' Practical Criticism (1929). Richards concentrated his analysis on the misinterpretations of Thirteen poems by advanced Cambridge undergraduates as revealed in free written responses. While Richards' methodology of rational study and classification of responses was not statistically controlled, his procedures for content analysis of literary response have profoundly influenced most subsequent studies. Particularly relevant to the qualitative analysis pursued in this investigation is Richards' identification of the following areas of difficulty experienced by students in their work with poetry: (1) difficulty of making out the plain sense of the poems; (2) difficulties of sensuous apprehension; (3) the pervasive influence of mnemonic irrelevancies; (4) stock responses; (5) sentimentality; (6) inhibition; (7) doctrinal adhesions; (8) technical presuppositions; (9) general critical preconceptions. (109-111)

In a recent edition of College English (February, 1977) Bennett and Arthur reported their separate attempts to replicate Richards' procedures with groups of American college students in California and Illinois. Both assumed that the change in pedagogy wrought by a generation's influence of the New Criticism might have produced a new set in students which would make them less prone to the obstacles to sane critical thinking that Richards revealed. In the more methodologically sound study, Bennett proposes the obvious questions: "To what extent has the impact of these new educational methods really changed students' ability to judge poetry? How adequately have our schools dealt with the problem of training students to think about literature?" (567) Both writers reported an instructive, if not gratifying, repetition of history. Apart from the displacement of concerns with diction, rhyme and rhythm, emotion and philosophy, by an overwhelming concern with imagery, contemporary readers provided almost exact parallels in their difficulties with "objective" reading as had been discovered by Richards. It is important to stress, as Richards does, that his Cambridge students were a select, homogeneous group, and Arthur, in particular, acknowledges the heterogeneity and "averageness" of his students. However, he proposes an explanation for these deficiencies which will sound through most of this review: that there is "in most of our students -- in most people -- a predisposition towards the sententious and the sentimental, and an aversion to the difficult, which combine to form attitudes not easily altered through any formal process of instruction." (587)

Downey (1929), in a study of the psychological processes of identification, describes three kinds of responders to art: the ecstatic, who becomes totally merged with the subject; the participator, who takes on several role assumptions, with different degrees of success; and the spectator who remains objective, detached, and self-controlled. Shirley (1966) elaborated Downey's scale to identify seven types of responders: the indifferent, the observer, the partial participator, the intense participator, the self-image synthesizer, the construct synthesizer, and the decision maker. The distinctions have obvious connections with the uses of language in the roles of participant and spectator, originally developed by Harding (1937) and extended by Britton (1970). There remain three general stages in the developing process of response: a progression from intellectual detachment, through an emotional realization, to an aesthetic objectivity, a final integration of the experience.

Three educational studies of response to literature, all of which are to some extent content analyses, are those by Meckel (1946), Loban (1954), and Taba (1955). Meckel investigated the free responses made by high school seniors to situations, in Hugh Walpole's novel Fortitude, selected for their relevance to the preoccupations of adolescents. Meckel's primary interest was in finding out what situations in the novel students respond to most vividly and what aspects of the novel they like and dislike. Since there were few situations cited in the students' free responses, a prepared list of events to be marked according to how vividly they were remembered was given the students. Meckel found that the students responded less to events involving self-confrontation than to situations involving love and parent-child relationships. The outline of responses indicating like-dislike of the novel were categorized in three ways:

(1) Personal-psychological: The reader's personal reaction to the work.

(2) Technical-critical: The reader's perception of language, literary devices, tone, relation of form to content, and evaluation.

(3) Content-ideational: The reader's identification and discussion of the theme or meaning of the work.

Analysis of these responses revealed great variety and individuality.

The predominant response was personal-psychological, and the least popular was technical-critical. While this finding is in contrast with those of more recent studies, it may be explained by the fact that the emphasis of the experiment was on personal recollection.

Loban (1954), who in an earlier article had listed content analysis as a valid means of evaluating growth in the study of literature (1948), investigated the responses of 120 high school students to ten stories selected for their appeal to the reader's feelings of sympathy. The students selected for participation fell into two extreme groups: those highly sensitive to the feelings of others, and those least sensitive to such feelings. One of the four response measures employed was a free, undirected discussion of each story written immediately after completion of the story. These written responses were scored by comparing them with a list of seventy points which five competent judges had agreed a sympathetic reader might notice. Among Loban's conclusions relevant to the present study and based on his analysis of all the responses are the following: (1) almost all adolescents miss important implications while reading fiction; (2) many adolescent readers respond superficially and artificially to stories, failing to acknowledge the facts provided in the stories; (3) few know what to say about literature and attempt to disguise this shortcoming with glib, formulaic references to style and language; and (4) many adolescents resist any literature that requires reflection or consideration of ideas contrary to their expectations or attitudes.

As part of a year-long investigation into the dynamics of peer culture in an eighth grade class, Taba (1955) developed the first actual classification of response to literature as part of her efforts to categorize the free, unstructured oral discussions by twenty-five students of certain books and stories. In line with certain stated objectives, Taba identified prior to analysis four broad categories, the first two of which were further classified. These four categories were: (1) projections -- attempts to perceive or understand the story, to explain and evaluate behavior; (2) generalizations, or students' application of facts from the story to general principles concerning behavior; (3) self-references; and (4) irrelevancies. Of the four categories, Taba found the first, projections, to be the dominant response, accounting for 50.9 to 87.2% of the students' statements. She concluded that eighth-grade students are primarily concerned with the content of a story and that factual restatement of the action and explanations of behaviors and situations occur frequently in their responses. Interpretations occur infrequently and tend to be factual and concrete. Students tend to base their interpretations rather heavily on their own experiences. They are not particularly disposed to judgmental attitudes or moralizing. Taba identified four types of responders: (1) those who enter the story freely and fully without relating the story to previous experiences: (2) egocentric readers who find meaning only by associating the story with personal experiences; (3) egocentric readers who make prescriptive judgments about how the characters should behave; and (4) readers who project or generalize and therefore benefit from the new experiences offered by the work.

Like Taba, Earl Forman (1951) used students' responses to develop various categories of response. Working with seventh and ninth-grade students, Forman identified three scales of response to literature. The "Elaboration of Detail" scale classifies responses to characters, scenes, and actions along a spectrum from indefinite responses to explicit, individualized descriptions. The "Character Vitalization Scale" charts responses dealing with feelings and character traits from vague, generalized, and obvious to an analysis of motivation and personality. The "Continuity of Purpose Scale" is concerned with the purpose, meaning, and order of events.

The source for Skelton's (1968) classification system was the writings of fourth, fifth, and sixth graders in response to poems. Some of the poems were read aloud by the teacher and some were read silently. Five categories emerged on a scale from reader-connotative (engagement) responses, through author-connotative (thematic) statements, to reader-denotative statements (literal translations). Bounding these three stances, involving the reader and his reaction to the personal and formal qualities of the work, were expressions of like or dislike and unrelated comments. Skelton was interested in the number of different categories used by the students in their responses to four poems of increasing difficulty. In the papers of the 270 students he found that 37% used two or more categories for the first response but that 48% of the students used two or more for the fourth poem, which was the most difficult. Skelton reports that the responses to the most difficult poem showed a decided increase in the students' subjective involvement; in the absence of a clear understanding they apparently reported their personal reactions. However, among the students of above-average ability, more responded in author-connotative terms, and this trend was most pronounced among the older students.

Ash (1969) constructed a test of literary judgment that was administered to six classes of eleventh graders. The four part test measured (1) thematic imitation, (2) paragraph selection, (3) title choice, and (4) distorted images. The students chose the best of three versions or options for eight to ten separate items. In the most informative part of the study, students from the high and low ability groups were interviewed in order to determine the reasons for their choices. From these interviews Ash classified response types and reported the percentage of occurrence for each type and for the two groups as follows:

	High	Low	Total Group
Guess	8.9	9.5	9.6
Misreading	6.8	17.7	12.3
Unsupported Judgment	19.9	31.9	29.3
Supported Judgment	9.9	3.6	3.4
Poetic Preconceptions (Rules)	13.5	3.6	8.7
Isolated Elements	20.9	10.6	13.5
Narrational	1.1	8.9	5.7
Technical	7.2	2.3	5.8
Irrelevant Associations	3.1	3.6	3.3
Interpretation	6.2	7.1	6.4
Self-Involvement	2.5	1.2	2.0

Three negative types of categories -- guess, unsupported judgment, and misreading -- accounted for 49% of the students' stated reasons for their choices, leading Ash to conclude that in general the level of literary judgment, that is, the students' ability to justify their choices or preferences, is very low. However, as Purves and Beach (1972) suggest: "Granted that understanding, criteria, and personal involvement are all constituents of taste one wonders how they are related to the rhetoric of defending judgment." (12) In fact, there is a strong suggestion running through most of the studies reported here that variations in verbal ability might tend to overshadow the very nuances of response which the investigators are attempting to unearth. Such considerations serve only to cloud Ash's perplexing finding that the high ability group evidenced more inaccurate preconceptions about poetry, and showed slightly less interest in interpretation than the low ability group.

A far more precise attempt to categorize response from the actual responses of students was made by Squire (1964). Based on the oral responses of fifty-two ninth and tenth graders while reading four short stories, the Squire classification, despite certain limitations discussed below, continues to be used as a standard in studies of response to literature. It is the basis, among others, of the work of Wilson (1966), Luchsinger (1969), Grindstaff (1968), and Robinson (1973). Seven categories are defined: (1) Literary judgments -- direct or implied evaluations of the story as an artistic work; (2) Interpretational responses -- efforts by the reader to generalize from and discover meaning in the story; (3) Narrational reactions -- responses in which details or facts in the story are recounted but not interpreted; (4) Associational responses -- associations by the reader of ideas, events, places, and people within his experience; (5) Self-involvement -- efforts by the reader to associate himself with the behavior of characters; (6) Prescriptive judgments -- attempts by the reader to prescribe a course of action for a character based on the reader's absolute standard; and (7) Miscellaneous -- responses not coded elsewhere. The response patterns were examined in relation to sex, intelligence, reading ability, socioeconomic status, and certain personality predispositions.

Table 1 shows the mean percentages among boys and girls for the seven categories:

TABLE 1

MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES FOR CATEGORIES
BY BOYS AND GIRLS IN THE SQUIRE STUDY
OF RESPONSE TO LITERATURE
(N=52: 27 BOYS, 25 GIRLS)

Categories	Mean Percentages Boys	 Girls
Literary Judgment	14.8	14.9
Interpretational	42.6	43.9
Narrational	21.4	16.3
Associational	3.5	2.4
Self-Involvement	13.3	16.8
Prescriptive Judgment	2.7	3.6
Miscellaneous	1.7	2.1

Squire's careful study reveals considerable data about the responses of adolescents to fiction, particularly responses during the reading of fiction and common sources of misinterpretation. Notable findings about response in general include the following: (1) Interpretational responses occur more frequently than any other kind, more than doubling in frequency of occurrence the second category, narrational reactions; (2) little correlation is apparent between response patterns and the sex of the subjects; (3) only a slight positive correlation is reported between the subjects' total responses and their measured verbal fluency; (4) high socioeconomic status is accompanied by an increase in interpretational responses; low socioeconomic status, by an increase in narrational reactions; and (5) a strong positive relationship exists between the number of responses coded as literary judgment and those coded as self-involvement. This last result suggests that students who become involved in a story tend, after reading, to analyze aspects of the story. This finding contradicts the assumption that emotional involvement with literature necessarily precludes or interferes with a cognitive analysis of the work.

Paralleling, and in certain areas extending the work of Richards and Taba, Squire defined six major sources of difficulty in his fifteen-year-old subjects' attempts at literary interpretation. These included: (1) failure to grasp the obvious meanings of the author; (2) reliance on stock responses when faced with a seemingly familiar situation; (3) "happiness binding," or an unwillingness to face the realities of unpleasant interpretations; (4) critical predispositions, demanding for example that situations be "true to life," or that the writing be marked by "good description;" (5) irrelevant associations with personal experiences or with elements of stories read earlier; and (6) a determination to achieve certainty in interpretation associated with unwillingness to hold judgment in abeyance.

Fanselow's (1971) replication of the Squire study with bilingual ninth graders revealed slightly different results. He found that the younger, bilingual students included fewer prescriptive judgments, literary judgments, and interpretational statements than Squire's group. Also, the reactions involved great variations both between students and within an individual's response to the four stories, anticipating the finding of some of the more recent research, that the text is of considerable importance in determining response. Like Squire, Fanselow indicated that the students often resorted to retelling, that they failed to discuss important thematic issues, and that they made superficial literary judgments.

Wilson (1966) used the Squire categories to investigate the responses of fifty-four college freshmen, prior to and after class discussion of three novels (The Catcher in the Rye, A Farewell to Arms, and The Grapes of Wrath). He found that the three class periods devoted to discussion after each reading effected an increase in interpretational responses from a mean of 54.5% on the first response to a mean of 78.4% on the second. The percentages of response for each category before and after discussion were as follows:

	Before	After
Literary Judgment	17.0	7.0
Interpretational	54.5	78.4
Narrational	13.0	3.6
Associational	2.8	1.3
Self-Involvement	10.5	7.0
Prescriptive	1.4	1.1
Miscellaneous	0.8	1.6

In discussing the findings of his study Wilson describes various degrees of relationship between self-involvement and interpretation, illustrating on the one hand Downey's contention that an exaggerated identification on the part of the reader can block analysis, and on the other that initial self-involvement seems necessary for effective interpretation. He unearthed very few of the difficulties enumerated by Squire, yet allows that "statements of personal reaction may be less sharply formulated and logical than . . . later, considered attempts at interpretations of the novel's meanings." (40) Wilson's study raises certain doubts about the usefulness of any content-analysis system, unless the individual responses in a category are also carefully analysed and assessed. The mere coding of a response as interpretational or literary judgment far from defines its shape, since many of the responses which Wilson coded in these categories were conventional and superficial.

Luchsinger (1969), therefore, concentrated on the qualitative as well as the quantitative aspects of student responses. Her 140 tenth-grade students read four pairs of short stories distinguished by degree of complexity. In the delayed responses there were again more interpretational statements, and fewer literary judgments and self-involvement statements. After answering a ten-question comprehension test, students wrote answers to two questions: (1) Why do you think the author wrote this story? (Purpose), and (2) What did you see as you read this story? (Imagery). The responses to these questions were coded using the Squire categories, and were qualitatively analysed on a scale from one to six using the following criterion statements:

(1) Autobiographical: The student assumes that something in the author's life prompted the story.

(2) Factual Explanation: The student relates a fact or incident on which the plot hinges, but gives no evidence of sub-surface meaning.

(3) Literary Judgment: The student gives some hazy evidence of interaction with the story, but most comments are pat statements such as, "I liked it because it has an exciting beginning."

(4) Partial Interpretation: The student gives some evidence of understanding the ideas behind the story, but does not explain or defend his statements, and tends to make trite, often moralistic judgments.

(5) Interpretation of Behavior: The students shows that he has combined fact with insight to reach a conclusion about a character's behavior.

(6) Transfer: The student combines levels four and five and in so doing goes beyond both. These responses represent the highest degree of generalization in that they utilize specific information from the story to relate the story to truths from the real world.

An additional set of criterion statements was used to evaluate the answers to the question about imagery, a term apparently used as a catch-all, or metaphor for higher levels of interpretation:

> (1) Physical Objects: The student "sees" only concrete details.
>
> (2) Basic Characterization: The student includes some of the distinguishing qualities that help to explain character motivation. These responses are, however, more concerned with surface action than with actual interpretation of behavior.
>
> (3) Inter-character Change: The student who responds at this level "sees" at least the basic reasons for conflicts among characters. In some instances, the students explain why characters are drawn to each other. These responses include little attempt at generalization, but in the comparisons and contrasts they draw, they go beyond the less complex statements of level two.
>
> (4) Inner-character Change: The student who responds at this level "sees" why and how an incident alters a character's life.
>
> (5) Inclusive Interpretation of Behavior: The student identifies themes and incorporates analysis of character into statements on the underlying ideas behind the story.
>
> (6) Transfer: The student explains how he has "seen" the condition in the stories in his own life. As was true for the scale of Purpose, these responses represent the highest degree of assimilation in that students relate the story to truths from the real world. (57-58)

Since Luchsinger's findings relate to the interaction of both ability level and story type, they will be reported here as a prelude to the concerns of the next two sections of this review. She found, as did Morris, who used interviews and questionnaires, that intelligence apparently is not predictive of the kind or quality of response the student produces. In general, there were distinct differences in the readers' abilities to perceive purpose and imagery, since they evinced more security in dealing with the former than with the latter. The less complex stories, rather surprisingly, evoked more complex responses from these students. She concurs with Squire and Wilson that the inexperienced readers need direction and assistance in learning to interpret literature.

Also using the Squire system of coding, Grindstaff (1968) compared the free responses of three classes of tenth-grade students to four novels. One class received instruction by the method of structural analysis, another class by the method of experiential reflective analysis. The third, a control group, received no instruction but merely read the novels. The post-treatment protocols written by all students, when analyzed for content, showed that "the responses of adolescent readers varied according to the kind of novel read, and according to the kind of approach used in teaching the novel." (40) Patterns of response to the different novels varied significantly for four categories: self-involvement, associational, literary judgment, and interpretational. Significantly more responses were written by the control group, but these tended to be either interpretational or narrational. While interpretational responses were most common for all groups, narrative responses were judged "to be the easiest and least sophisticated of any of the responses." (v)

Although both teaching techniques resulted in more divergent response patterns, the experiential reflective analysis class -- taught by a transactional approach relating the work to the students' experiences and their experience of the work -- had the most divergent patterns of all. Students in that class had more responses than the structural analysis class in the self-involvement, associational, and literary judgment categories. They also performed better on Burton's

Short Story Choice Test, a criterion measure Grindstaff employed to test maturity of literary appreciation. Grindstaff argued the superiority of experiential reflective analysis over structural analysis as a teaching technique in these terms: "The lack of dependency on the teacher for answers, and the increased self-sufficiency of the experiential reflective students to examine literature resulted in these students learning to read more critically and with less difficulty than did the students from the other two classes." (122)

Robinson (1973) developed two instructional strategies derived from an analysis of authoritative statements written about the response-oriented literature curriculum. In the first of these strategies, a teacher-directed set of procedures involved the use of lecture-discussions, class discussions, small group discussions, panels, debates, and written commentaries. In the second strategy, the teacher acted as facilitator for a range of experience-centred activities involving dramatizations and improvizations, mime, collage, taped readings, brainstorming, opinion polling, and role playing. Robinson collected pre- and posttest protocols for equal numbers of eleventh grade classes who were taught a three week unit on the short story employing one or other of the response-oriented strategies. Using the Squire system of coding, he found that there were no significant differences for either group in the response categories of literary judgment, narrational response, associational response, prescriptive judgment response, or miscellaneous response. In rather marked contrast to Grindstaff's finding, the students who were exposed to procedures marked by less teacher-direction, and a wider range of student-initiated activities wrote significantly more interpretive responses than those in the more teacher-directed groups.

In the second phase of the study, however, students in the less teacher-directed group rated the instructional strategy higher than did students in the teacher-directed group. Moreover, students in the former group selected goals for the literature curriculum which stressed the development of imagination and self-expression, while those in the latter group selected items in the literary heritage-discipline category and the skills category as being of most significance. Robinson suggests that the method of instruction may clearly influence students' perceptions of the study of literature in the high school.

In a study of 15 college upperclassmen which employed oral introspective answers to questions about a poem in addition to retrospective answers to questions concerning response strategy, Morris (1970) expanded on Squire's categories. First, in analyzing the thought units of the free responses, he found that 58% were poem-centred, 17% were direct quotations from the poem, and 25% were not focused on the work. For the adapted Squire categories, Morris recorded the following breakdown of the poem-centred response strategies: (1) Associational -- 9%; (2) Reaction General -- 10%; (3) Perception -- 3%; (4) Comprehension -- 11%; (5) Interpretation -- 64%; and (6) Appreciation -- 4%. Comparison of his data with those of similar studies (Taba, 1955; Squire, 1964; Wilson, 1966; and Cooper, 1969) indicates a heavy orientation towards interpretation. After examining the individual results Morris discovered that some students adopted a convergent pattern of response (with the emphasis on comprehension and interpretation), while others preferred a divergent pattern (emphasizing perceptions, association, and general reactions to the work).

In analyzing factors such as the length of the response, reading habits, or poetry-writing experience, Morris could find very few relationships between these variables and the students' scholastic ranks. He also charted the findings from other studies using content analysis, translating the other schemes into the categories of his study, but he could discern no consistent developmental trends apart from the predominance of interpretation which he (like Wilson) attributed to the kind of training students receive in literary study. Further analysis of retrospective answers indicated that most students believed that their free responses reflected a unique strategy or approach to the reading of poetry.

Sanders (1970) studied the effects of instruction on the interpretation of literature, and using Squire's classification system analyzed the responses of ninth graders to eight short stories. In the experimental groups the response was the final activity of a multiple procedure that included setting the purpose for reading, preteaching vocabulary, completing guide materials after the reading, and illustrating the story with a visual activity. The control group read the story silently and wrote the response.

Both the quantity and quality of the interpretive responses were measured, as well as the degree of fluency (the number of ideas and words) in the protocols. Sanders found that there were more interpretational responses offered by the experimental students as opposed to those in the control group (54.8% and 18.39% respectively), and that the experimental students' responses were more fully developed and generally superior to those of the control group. To measure the quality of students' interpretations, Sanders devised a four point scale with these descriptions:

> (1) Exceptional insight, a meaningful transaction; a sound perception of meaning; a sense of the story's artistic dimension.
>
> (2) An adequate grasp of meaning; fairly mature; promising but incomplete.
>
> (3) A limited sense of significance; a largely literal perception; a bit beyond narrative recall.
>
> (4) Inadequate; perhaps irrelevant; insufficient to permit a judgment. (60)

In determining the effects of the experimental treatment Sanders found the responses of the experimental group to be qualitatively superior. He observed, as well, fewer literary judgments (25.5%) for this group as opposed to the control group (71.17%).

Burton and his colleagues (1968) made use of the Squire classification system in their evaluation of the Project English venture at Florida State University. The project involved not an experimental treatment but an evaluation of three different curricular approaches: (1) the traditional "tripod" curriculum organized around literature, language, and composition; (2) a thematic organization; and (3) a cognitive processes approach. One of the measures used to evaluate the various approaches was an analysis of the students' free responses to short stories and poetry. Their findings from all the evaluative measures are reported by Purves and Beach (1972) in Literature and the Reader, and the following specifically refer to the free response:

> With respect to the free response to the short story, students in the thematic and cognitive processes curriculum made fewer literary judgments and more interpretational responses. The students in the tripartite curriculum made more value judgments about poetry; those in the thematic curriculum, more paraphrases and abstract interpretations; and those in the cognitive process curriculum, more self-involvement responses. (154)

The curricular approach would seem to have a distinct effect on the response style of the students, but the evaluators found that the differences were not significant, and that variances were produced more by schools and the teachers than by curricular strategy.

In preparation for an international study of achievement in literature, Purves (1968) developed a schema for content analysis that is directly related to the classification of a broad range of written responses to a literary work. The development of the Elements of Writing about a Literary Work began with the solicited responses of twelve influential critics (including Josephine Miles, Stanley Hyman, Wilbur Scott, and Albert Hofstadter) to Kafka's "An Old Manuscript." In addition, Purves and his associates examined 200 student papers and 100 responses from high school and college teachers. The resulting system provides a comprehensive table of elements which embraces the critical and subcritical response, "the literarily fashionable and the actual." (Purves, 1966, 94) Despite its detail and complexity, Purves suggests that his system is neither taxonomic, nor embedded in any one literary-critical theory or combination of theories. The ultimate application to the classroom of Purves' categories and elements is to sharpen the meaning of such widely accepted, yet nebulous curricular goals as "appreciation," "understanding our literary heritage," "finding meaning in literature," or "developing critical standards and attitudes." According to Purves, teachers must be disabused of the belief that all students proceed through levels of response in lockstep fashion.

The basic principle of organization is the relationship a reader may have with a text. Purves first defines four major categories, or postures, as follows: *

> (1) Engagement-Involvement: This category defines the various ways by which the writer indicates his surrender to the literary work, by which he informs his reader of the ways in which he has experienced the work or its various aspects. (6) Elsewhere Purves (1967) was more explicit about what this category contains: the writer's stated reaction to the work or its characters, his discussion of the vicarious experience as it relates to himself, and his impressions of the work. (311)
>
> (2) Perception: The second category, according to Purves, is almost self-explanatory: it encompasses the ways in which a person looks at the work as an object distinct from himself . . . separate from the writer's consideration of the world around the writer. This perception (analogous to "understanding") is analytic, synthetic, or classificatory and deals with the work either in isolation or as an historical fact needing to be related to a context. (6)
>
> (3) Interpretation: This category refers to the attempt to find meaning in the work, to generalize about it, to draw inferences from it, to find analogues to it in the universe that the writer inhabits. (7) From the interpreting stance, the work is not seen as a literary object, or not purely as a literary object, but as a heterocosm that can be related to the world around the writer.(7)
>
> (4) Evaluation: Included in this category are all statements about why the writer thinks the work good or bad. His judgment may be derived from either a personal or an objective criterion.(8)

These four categories (together with a fifth, labelled Miscellaneous) are broken down into twenty-four subcategories which in turn yield 139 elements, the ultimate in specificity for the system.

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* In the descriptions given by Purves, "writer" refers to any person responding in writing to literature, not to the author of the literary work.

Since the present study used the Purves system, through the subcategory level, brief descriptions of the subcategories seem in order. First, Table 2 provides a schematic overview of the categories and subcategories.

Within the category of Engagement-Involvement there are four subcategories: 100: Engagement General -- statements of general involvement, such as "I enjoyed the story"; 110: Reaction to Literature -- reactions of the writer to literature in general, to the author, to the morality of the work or author, or to the willingness of the writer to accept the fictionality of the work; 120: Reaction to Form -- expressions of the writer's response to the way the work is written, including the writer's identification with the work, the retelling of the work, and the impressionistic statement; 130: Reaction to Content -- the writer's reaction to the world of the work, including conjecture, identification, and moral reaction to characters and events.

Under Perception, nine subcategories are listed. These are: 200: Perception General -- responses of general perception, including objective statements about the length or format of the work, and most importantly, statements about lack of comprehension concerning the action or language of the work; 210: Perception of Language -- statements of linguistic perception, for example of morphology, typography, syntax, sound and sound patterns, diction, or lexicography; 220: Perception of Literary Devices -- identifications (without attempts at interpretation) of metaphor and simile, imagery, allusion, or irony; 230: Perception of Content -- references to the characters, subject matter, action, or setting of the work; 240: Perception of Relation of Technique to Content -- statements relating the verbal, stylistic, or presentational means to the sense or effect of the work; 250: Perception of Structure --

TABLE 2

THE PURVES CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES: A SUMMARY

I: ENGAGEMENT INVOLVEMENT

100: Engagement General
110: Reaction to Literature
120: Reaction to Form
130: Reaction to Content

II: PERCEPTION

200: Perception General
210: Perception of Language
220: Perception of Literary Devices
230: Perception of Content
240: Perception of Relation of Technique to Content
250: Perception of Structure
260: Perception of Tone
270: Perception of Literary Classification
280: Perception of Contextual Classification

III: INTERPRETATION

300: Interpretation General
310: Interpretation of Style
320: Interpretation of Content
330: Mimetic Interpretation
340: Typological Interpretation
350: Hortatory Interpretation

IV: EVALUATION

400: Evaluation General
410: Affective Evaluation
420: Evaluation of Method
430: Evaluation of Author's Vision

V: MISCELLANEOUS

500: Divergent response; Rhetorical fillers; Reference to other writers; Comparison with other works; Digressions; Unclassifiable statements which describe the order or arrangement of the work, of parts to parts, parts to whole, plot and so on; 260: Perception of Tone -- comments on tone, effect, mood, pace, and point of view; 270: Perception of Literary Classification -- references to the writer's perception of the work as part of a larger body called literature; and 280: Perception of Contextual Classification -- statements indicating the writer's perception of the work in the context of biography or history.

Six subcategories are provided under Interpretation: 300: Interpretation General -- responses of general interpretation, such as "I don't know what this story means"; 310: Interpretation of Style -- statements in which the writer infers meaning from stylistic devices such as metaphor, irony, or symbolism; 320: Interpretation of Content -- statements in which the writer draws inferences about characters, events, setting, and even the author; 330: Mimetic Interpretation -- statements in which the writer interprets the work as a reflection of the world using as his basis psychological, social, political, historical, ethical, or aesthetic data; 340: Typological Interpretation -- statements, using the same criteria, which suggest that the work not only reflects the world, but presents a highly generalized pattern of the world; and 350: Hortatory Interpretation -- statements in which the writer sees the work as a commentary on how things should be.

There are four subcategories under Evaluation. These are: 400: Evaluation General -- general evaluative comments, such as "I did not like the story"; 410: Affective Evaluation -- responses that judge according to emotional appeal; 420: Evaluation of the Author's Method -- statements using aesthetic criteria to evaluate the work; and 430:

Evaluation of the Author's Vision -- statements evaluating the sufficiency of the work, especially in regard to its plausibility, or moral or thematic significance.

Finally, Purves recognized a Miscellaneous category (500), and suggests that extraneous comments, rather than being put in a "dust bin," can be generally accommodated as divergent responses, rhetorical fillers, references to other writers on literature, comparisons with other works, digressions, and (inevitably) unclassified statements ("The people in this story are the characters.") which simply make no sense.

There appear to be certain advantages of the Purves system over the widely used method developed by Squire (1964). Purves cites a need for a "higher degree of discrimination" in inspecting "the writer's counters or procedures," than that provided in Squire's seven broad categories -- Literary Judgments, Interpretational Responses, Narrational Reactions, Associational Responses, Self-Involvement, Prescriptive Judgments, and Miscellaneous. Further, a more exact comparison of the two systems reveals the "overlap" that Purves sensed in Squire's categories. For example, while Squire's narrational reaction compares with Purves' category of Perception, it seems limited largely to perceptions of content, as opposed to form. More interestingly, three of Squire's seven categories fall not only within the Purves category of Engagement-Involvement, but can be located within the same subcategory:

Squire	Purves
Associational Responses	Subcategory 130, Element 134.
Self-Involvement	Subcategory 130, Elements 130,133.
Prescriptive Judgments	Subcategory 130, Element 131.

Beardsley (1969), in an early review of Purves' schema, suggested refinements in the subcategories of Engagement which would allow clearer distinctions among statements made about the work, the author, and the speaker or narrator. Later, Purves and Beach (1972), drawing on the experience of researchers who had used the system, saw a need "to differentiate between the personal responses that refer to oneself and one's associations and those that refer to one's feelings about the work and one's relation to it." (14) This distinction between autobiographical responses which originate in the reader's private experiences, and those personal responses to the work itself provides a more faithful picture of the forms of Engagement than that provided in the original distinction between reaction to form and reaction to content. In addition Perception can be easily divided into (1) narrational retellings of the work, and (2) descriptions of particular aspects of the work -- language, characters, setting, etc. Similarly, the forms of Interpretation can be easily accommodated under (1) interpretations of parts of the work (characters, language, rhetoric, tone, scenes), and (2) interpretations of the whole work. Finally, Evaluation can be distinguished as the expression of praise or blame for (1) the evocative power of the work, (2) the construction of the work, and (3) the meaningfulness of the work. Michalak (1976), who adds an additional evaluative category concerning the general nature of the work, provides an outline (and examples) of these refinements as follows:

Personal Statement (engagement-involvement):

(1) about the reader -- an autobiographical digression (I enjoy doing new and different things.)

(2) about the work -- expressing personal engagement with it (I think the two teenagers were both contemptible.)

Descriptive Statement (perception):

(3) narrational -- retelling parts of the work (In the story the woman had a dream.)

(4) descriptive of particular aspects of the work (The author clearly shows the feelings the husband and wife had for each other were genuine.)

Interpretive Statement:

(5) of parts of the work (The characters were lacking motivation because they did not believe they could succeed.)

(6) of the whole work (The story describes an old man's loss of happiness.)

Evaluative Statement:

(7) about the evocativeness of the work (The story is beautiful and moving.)

(8) about the construction of the work (The incidents in the story are well organized.)

(9) about the meaningfulness of the work (The story presents a convincing example that love does exist and this is why it is a good story.)

(10) about the general nature of the work (This story was another in a series of bores.) (39)

Morris (1976) reports the usefulness of the total Purves schema to the sophisticated reader by charting her own responses at the category, subcategory, and element levels to one short story, "The Reading of the Will" by John Knowles. She notes that fewer than 10 of the 139 elements needed to be omitted because of the special qualities of the story. In order to provide a firm basis for comparison with previous studies which had analyzed adolescent responses, the coding for the present study needed to be restricted to the category and subcategory levels of Purves' classification.

Since 1968 many other experimenters have utilized the system developed by Purves and Rippere to describe and measure response to literature. Weiss (1968), for example, tested two approaches to teaching poetry -- inductive and programmed. Eight classes of high school juniors were involved in the experiment, in which responses to two poems were analyzed for types of response statements and for differences between groups. Weiss found, using pretest and posttest samples, and a transfer test, that those taught inductively included more statements classified as Perception and Interpretation, a pattern that Morris (1970) had called convergent. This group too was judged more fluent. He noted that programmed texts do not seem to affect significantly the students' approach to poetry or their responses.

Hoffmann (1971) described the responses of 90 seniors to nineteenth century lyric poetry, and compared the reactions of students in three different cities. Hoffmann wrote a series of statements that coincided with the four major Purves categories. After reading each of the poems, the students indicated their degree of agreement with each of the assertions, e.g. "I understood and enjoyed the metre and rhyme of the poem." He found the instrument usable as a means of producing response and reported the highest percentages of positive reactions were in Perception and Interpretation, suggesting that the students had received considerable training and practice in relating structural aspects of the poems to their meanings. Hoffmann also pointed out that the low percentage of agreement or positive reaction in the Evaluation category indicates that students do not have the critical powers or the value system requisite for assurance in evaluation. Also, among these twelfth graders, the lack of positive Engagement did not seem to affect the students' positive reactions in the Perception and Interpretation categories. Finally, the greatest variation among students from different cities occurred in the category of Evaluation.

Another experiment involving lyric poetry was designed by Grimme (1971) to study the effects of different teaching approaches. His subjects were college freshmen and the teaching approaches, like Grindstaff's, were (1) structured analysis, (2) experiential-reflective, and (3) existential, which he describes also as limited teaching. Grimme used the twenty-four subcategories of the Purves classification to analyze the responses written before and after teaching. The combined mean percentages, reported for the four major categories, are as follows:

	Structured Analysis	Experiential Reflective	Existential
Interpretation	43.0	46.5	22.0
Perception	38.8	27.2	40.6
Engagement	9.9	13.8	19.7
Miscellaneous	5.0	5.8	13.0
Evaluation	3.5	7.0	4.9

The students in the structured analysis group revealed an interest in Perception and Interpretation, much as the students inductively taught in Weiss' experiment. Those in the experiential-reflective group produced responses characterized by fewer Perception statements and by well-supported interpretations. Both of the treatment groups included fewer references to content, but the responses of the existential (control) group revealed a concentration on perception of content, on statements of engagement, and on miscellany, a pattern which Grimme describes as impressionistic, discursive, and digressive. He concludes, as does Grindstaff, that the experiential-reflective approach can accommodate both the students' personal reactions and the objective analysis of the work itself.

To measure the effect of prior attitude on a student's response Faggiani (1971) used the four Purves categories to determine the students' personal involvement in a subject and the degree of engagement that appeared in responses to a work that dealt with that subject. The ninth-grade students in taped interviews discussed their feelings about dying for one's country. Then they wrote free responses after reading "Dulce et Decorum Est," and Faggiani found a significant correlation between a strong prior attitude to the subject, whether positive or negative, and the degree of engagement revealed in the responses.

Beach (1973) employed a modified form of the Purves categories to trace the differences in the private and public (group) responses to three poems of three groups of college juniors. The seven categories that he used were: Engagement, Perception, Interpretation, Interpretation of the Whole, Evaluation, Autobiographical Digression, and General Digression. The study employed a counterbalanced design where the three groups of subjects met to discuss each of the three poems after completing one of three pre-discussion strategies: (1) taping their private responses; (2) writing their responses instead of recording them on tape; and (3) merely reading the poem. After combining the categories of Interpretation and Interpretation of the Whole, Beach found that the pre-discussion assignments resulted in more Interpretation for the ensuing discussion than was the case when the students merely read the poem. This movement was accompanied by a parallel decrease in the combined categories of Autobiographical and General Digression. Further, Beach found that his subjects tended to respond in the discussions as they had alone; that they employed a relatively consistent strategy ("cognitive style") regardless of differences in the poems, assignment tasks, or discussions; that given a supportive group setting, they were able, in discussion, to go beyond their solitary responses; and that they appeared to need time to organize their literal and personal reactions before moving on to Interpretation. He found, as did Morris (1970), that his subjects had some theoretical rationale which accounted for the general consistency of their approaches, most often "the practical advice and procedures of their previous literature courses, the expediences of traditional classroom practice." (169)

More recently a number of studies using the Purves categories have addressed themselves to this question of the extent to which schools inculcate in students a preferred way of approaching a literary work. Sullivan (1974) successfully changed the content of tenth-grade students' literary essays by making them aware of a range of response behaviors, and the extent to which this range was present in their own personal patterns of response. Three classes participated in the experiment, the experimental group, a comparison group, and the control group. The cooperating teachers were trained to classify students' statements according to Purves' four major categories. More importantly, the experimental students themselves were familiarized with the classification system, so that the treatment involved a constant recording and reviewing of the range of responses written about a series of short stories. The comparison group also wrote free responses, but only as a basis for class discussion, a sharing of opinions, or as preparation for other activities associated with the study of the short story. The control group simply wrote responses to the stories selected for the delayed posttest. The specific conclusions drawn by Sullivan are as follows:

> (1) That the experimental treatment did result in producing a response pattern significantly different from those of the two control groups, a pattern that includes more statements of Engagement and Interpretation, and correspondingly less Perception and Evaluation,
>
> (2) That modification of response tendencies is possible through instructional techniques, specifically through the introduction of a content analysis system and the examination of individual patterns of response, and
>
> (3) That content analysis can be a useful instrument for the classroom teacher as a means of describing the patterns of response for individuals and groups, of determining objectives and direction for growth in response, and of measuring the effect of various techniques aimed at the development of the student's response to literature. (130)

McCurdy (1975) and Michalak (1976) took this line of enquiry one step further by examining the relationship between the teacher's preferred mode of response, the teacher's reaction to the students' preferred mode of response, and the subsequent and related effect of instruction on students' response patterns. McCurdy asked teachers to judge the adequacy of a pooled series of statements, written by their own students, which reflected the four categories of the Purves system. She also asked them to state individual goals for the teaching of literature. The patterns of teacher preference and these stated goals were then compared with the published attitudes and aims of leading English educators as expressed in Friends to This Ground (Stafford, 1967), a major publication of the NCTE Commission on Literature. McCurdy found that teachers in general exhibited more agreement than disagreement on the rankings of Purves' categories. The overall preference was for Interpretation responses, with Evaluation responses valued least of all. Engagement-Involvement responses were only slightly preferred over Perception responses. The teachers' self-reported statements of goals for literature instruction exhibited a clear preference for Perception, with Interpretation, Engagement-Involvement, and Evaluation following in that order. "Additionally, literature is often mentioned as a means to an end, a way to teach communication and/or thinking skills, and skills are ranked before Evaluation." (111) McCurdy found the teachers' preferences to be distinctly at variance with Friends to This Ground, which stressed Engagement-Involvement as the major goal of literature study and instruction. The other three categories -- Interpretation, Evaluation, and Perception -- were closely ranked in that order:

This discontinuity between the teacher's preferred mode of response, the thrust of the professional literature, and students' preferred mode of response had been hinted at by Mertz (1972). She found that Engagement was ranked as most important by a majority of teachers. On a response-preference measure this category was selected by 38 teachers in a sample of 52 surveyed. Interpretation was chosen by 13 teachers, while Perception was chosen by only one, and Evaluation by none of the teachers. In addition to using a response-preference measure, Michalak actually coded the written responses of four secondary English teachers to three short stories. She found, after paradigmatic analysis of the responses, that the teachers were evenly divided -- two preferring Evaluation, and two preferring Interpretation. After carefully observing the teaching behaviors of these four teachers over the period of a ten-week fiction elective, she was able to conclude that each had a distinctive teaching style (which she characterized as lecturer, entertainer, discusser, and experimenter). Despite these differences, instruction in the classrooms she observed was uniformly text-centred, emphasizing the description and analysis of events and characters — Perception and Interpretation. In addition, Michalak found little relation between the teachers' preferred mode of response and their stated objectives for literary study, although three of the four teachers showed some agreement between their stated instructional objectives and their styles of teaching literature. As for the students, ninety percent indicated a preferred mode of response in the pre-test, as determined by a paradigmatic analysis of their written responses. The pattern was as follows: Interpretation (53%), Perception (19%), Evaluation (16%), Engagement-Involvement (2%), and no preferred mode of response (10%). Approximately fifty percent of the students did change their preferred mode of response after the ten weeks of instruction, but strictly in accordance with the teacher emphasis outlined above. For the most part the movement was a back-and-forth one between Interpretation and Perception, with the students substituting one for the other, or even sacrificing Engagement-Involvement or Evaluation for Interpretation or Perception.

Heil (1974), analyzed the behavior of eight secondary school teachers while teaching a short story. She found two emerging patterns. A minority of teachers emphasized Engagement-Involvement and Evaluation, and were in turn more supportive of a wide range of student responses. The majority of teachers, however, emphasized Perception, Interpretation, and Miscellaneous responses. Heil also examined teachers' essays in response to the short story, as well as their comments on student essays. The marked consistencies in teaching style, the teachers' own responses, and their reactions to student protocols caused Heil to complain that "there was little in six of the seven classrooms which would stimulate student interest and effective response to the short story." (112)

McGreal (1976) chose to look at three teachers as they taught the same story at grades eight, ten, and twelve. Her major interest was in comparing the questioning behavior of teachers with their response preferences as recorded on a separate questionnaire and with their students' response preferences on a similar measure. McGreal concluded that each teacher had a distinct questioning pattern, but that there were also consistencies related to the age level of the students and to the specific selection under discussion. More particularly, most teachers, regardless of age level or story, asked many more questions dealing with content than with form. Also, students ranked questions related to interpretation of style and affective evaluation as of most importance.

Responses of Students of Different Ages and Ability Levels

Although early studies have indicated a low correlation between appreciation of literature and appreciation of other art forms (Speer, 1929; Rigg, 1937), some insight into response to literature by individuals of different ages can be gleaned from studies such as those by Burt (1934) and Machotka (1966) which investigate the reactions of individuals to various forms of art. Burt contends that the appreciation of literary qualities in particular depends on one's ability to apprehend form, itself dependent upon one's power to focus on the concrete items that constitute the content of an object of art. According to Machotka, children of age twelve or younger are far more influenced than eighteen-year-olds by the extent to which they can identify with the subject represented in a painting. When justifying their preferences, the older students are influenced to a greater degree by such factors as contrast, style, and composition. The relevant conclusion from these studies is that younger children tend to respond largely in terms of Engagement; older children, in terms of Perception. It follows, then, that differences in response preferences between older and younger individuals would be attributable not simply to the influence of schooling but also to maturing processes of perceiving and relating.

In their investigation of literary appreciation among students ranging in age from eleven to seventeen, Williams, Winter, and Woods (1938) found with increases in age a steady increase in references to specific literary merits of a work and a steady decrease in judgments based on irrelevant features, such as the emotional appeal of the subject matter. By age twelve -- and increasingly thereafter -- the students gained a sense of the more specifically literary qualities of a work and frequently referred to the logical structure of a passage, the aptness of a metaphor, or the ingenuity of a thought. This gradual trend away from Evaluation and Engagement toward Perception is also acknowledged by Taba (1955), whose eighth graders revealed during the course of a year a marked decrease in evaluative, self-referential, and prescriptive statements and an increase in factual and cause-and-effect statements.

Soares and Simpson (1967) found, among junior high school students, that eighth and ninth graders reveal more similarity in their short story preferences with each other than does either group with seventh graders. Seventh graders show a greater interest in short stories than either eighth graders or ninth graders. They also reveal a wider range of interests than the older students.

The studies reviewed in the previous section contain a potential mine of information on the response behaviors of subjects ranging from about age nine to adult. However, the major focus of these studies has not been on any cross-sectional analysis of the developing response. Rather, their major concern has been with such factors as the isolation of problems in reading, the actual development of content-analysis systems, or the application of various experimental procedures employing these systems of content analysis as descriptive benchmarks. In a study that comes closer to the concerns of this investigation, though still confining itself to a sample of 117 high school juniors, Cooper (1969) sought to discover whether these students had a relatively consistent preferred way of responding to short stories, even when those stories were notably dissimilar. After reading each story, the students were given a questionnaire which listed four kinds of essays that might be written about the story. Each question reflected one of the four stances that Purves has suggested a writer can take toward a literary work. Cooper found that 75% of his subjects revealed a consistent or preferred mode of response on the criterion of their choosing the same question for two of the three stories. Very few indicated an interest in Perception (3%). More of the students preferred Evaluation (15%); a slightly higher number chose Engagement (18%), and the majority of the students chose an Interpretation topic (39%).

The Piagetian underpinning of Applebee's (1973) study forced him to search (after classification of the responses of students aged six, nine, thirteen, and seventeen according to the Purves system) for a more developmentally relevant method of describing free responses to a "favorite" story. The levels that he defines are already relatively familiar to cognitive stage theorists. They are: (1) retelling -- an enactive, preoperational mode of response, which is largely global and undifferentiated; (2) summarizing -- ordering and classification in which the structuring is imposed by the reader instead of being accepted by him from the author; (3) analyzing -- a perception of the work as an artifact whose shape is intentional rather than accidental such that conjectures can be made of the actual or potential structure of the work; and (4) generalizing -- a conscious understanding of the world through the work, rather than a restrictive understanding of the functioning of the work itself. The present investigation assumes, however, that there is a potential, explanatory power in Purves' Elements that Applebee has overlooked. For example, the suggestion that "liking" and "judging" become more divergent as age increases can be tested by a thorough examination of those protocols marked by a heavy preponderance of Engagement and Evaluation responses.

Although Petrosky (1975, 1976, 1977) dealt with only four adolescent readers bound within the Piagetian stage-specific period of formal operations, his case study methodology allows for intensive differentiation in his analysis of the responses of fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds to a wide range of novels, short stories, and poems. The major questions he addressed were: How and to what degree are stage-specific operations related to the adolescent's response to literature? To what extent do the newly acquired abilities of abstraction and generalization play a dominant role in response patterns? Is response to literature learned? If so, to what degree do stage-specific abilities and limitations structure the types of responses possible in any given developmental stage? Does response to literature progress and develop along a longitudinal continuum consistent with general cognitive and ego-related development? And finally, is response to literature an extension of the adaptive functions of the intellect and the psyche? This last, most significant question embraces the complementary constructs derived from psychoanalytic ego psychology (especially as developed by Holland) which informed his analysis.

Petrosky's (1975) study identified five variables which influenced the adolescents' responses: (1) stage-specific operations; (2) identity themes; (3) past experiences; (4) expectations; and (5) reading ability. Petrosky was able to show that these variables exist in a "holistic continuum" with the stage-specific operations (thought processes), identity themes (personality patterns), and past experiences providing the most important interactions. Additional important conclusions were: (1) that recollection and reminiscing are integral aspects of the response process; (2) response to literature takes a form (or system) that is learned; (3) the learning of a response form (from the personal expression of thought or feelings to the analysis of theme or characterization) is a direct outcome of the expectations a respondent perceives via the kinds of questions asked of him in order to elicit responses; (4) different response forms allow different degrees of freedom or acceptability; and (5) response to literature evolves into a genuine dialectical experience when the respondents are given the opportunity to articulate and share personal impressions and interpretations in group situations. (259)

Petrosky's sensible insistence on the interrelationship of hypothetico-deductive logic or a concern with the future (as characteristics of formal operations) with identity theme, experience, and reading ability makes it impossible for him to generalize to the broad developmental stages proposed by Applebee. By juxtaposing the patterns of two of the case-study subjects, Petrosky is able to isolate differences within the phase of formal operations. He shows, for example, that the oldest subject, a fifteen-year-old girl, is consistently adept at abstract reasoning, hypothesizes easily, and does not find it necessary to relate literary characters and episodes to people and experiences she knows. By contrast, the youngest subject, a fourteen-year-old boy, is bound to the concrete operations of categorization, serialization, and the logic of relations. While he does hypothesize and reason abstractly, he relies heavily on past experiences to construct literal relations, in terms of informational utility from his literary experience. The differences, which Petrosky unearths, are matters of degree and sophistication.

Since the major emphasis of this study was on a determination of the differences in responses among a sample of Australian students in Grades 8, 10, and 12 to two literary forms, comparisons of mean responses were arrayed against the sometimes conflicting data provided either by individual researchers working with small national samples, or the data provided in larger studies at the national or cross-national levels. In the studies of Purves (1968), Pollock (1972), Somers (1972), and Applebee (1973) the express purpose was to allow the investigators to draw conclusions concerning cross-sectional patterns of response. While there are minor differences in the grade and age groupings in each of these studies, the findings can be applied to changes in response patterns as they relate to Grades 8 and 12 -- approximately age thirteen and age seventeen.

The pattern of inconsistencies across each of these studies warrants attention, at least at the level of Purves' categories. For example, Somers' American students preferred Evaluation as the dominant mode of response, while Purves' own subjects and Applebee's English sample preferred Perception. The preferences for Pollock's American students were almost evenly divided, with each of the major categories receiving between 20 and 27% of total responses. Other perplexities which arise from conclusions drawn by the individual researchers are as follows: (1) the almost negligible evidence of personal involvement (Engagement) responses in Applebee's sample; (2) a complete divergence in Perception responses, where Applebee's subjects more than halved their responses in this category between Grade 8 and Grade 12, while Purves' students showed a 13.34% increase in the opposite direction; (3) the comparatively low scores in Interpretation across all four studies; and (4) the general preference for Evaluation by the younger subjects, an apparent pattern reversed again by the English subjects.

Two large-scale studies, one national and one international in scope, are very closely related to the concerns of this investigation, especially as (1) they address themselves to the question of age-relevant responses, and (2) they provide significant cross-cultural data with which the data collected from Australian students can be compared. The most relevant section of the American National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) report is Theme 2, Responding to Literature (1973). The population surveyed included nine-year-olds, thirteen-year-olds, seventeen-year-olds, and adults (aged 26-35). The subjects were required to provide oral and written responses to a series of short stories and poems. The Purves categories, with three additions, were used to score the written responses. The additional categories were:

(1) Re-telling, which is for the essays which consist primarily of a paraphrase of the work. These would ordinarily be classified under perception, but in this case that category was reserved for only those responses that dealt with formal aspects of the work.
(2) Mavericks, which include the essays that are creative but not classifiable in the other categories.
(3) A seventh category was added for those essays that three scorers could not agree on.

Analysis of the written responses of the seventeen-year-olds indicated the following percentages for each work and each category:

	Eng.	Per.	Int.	Eval.	R-T.	Mav.	Cat. 7
Story	9%	1%	56%	5%	25%	4%	0%
Poem	3%	1%	86%	1%	1%	3%	5%

Thus, the two genres evoked marked differences in the response categories of re-telling and interpretation, with more interpretation and fewer paraphrasings in the poetry responses.

It is also noteworthy that when the paraphrases are separated from the category of Perception, only one per cent of these essays refer to the formal aspects of the work. Further, despite the stimulus or age level, there were never more than 3% Perception responses. Evaluation responses were almost as rare at all ages, with the highest percentage (9%) registered for the thirteen-year-olds' responses to the poem. This group also had the highest percentage of Engagement responses to the short story. The percentage of essays scored by paradigm, in each category for each work and age level were reported as follows:

Literary Work	Age	Eng.	Per.	Int.	Eval.	R-T.	Mav.
Story	13	12%	-	21%	4%	55%	6%
Poem	13	9%	3%	29%	9%	33%	11%
Story	17	9%	1%	56%	5%	25%	4%
Poem	17	3%	1%	86%	1%	1%	3%
Story	Adult	8%	1%	69%	2%	16%	1%
Poem	Adult	9%	1%	81%	1%	3%	2%

After the essays had been coded by paradigm, they were then scored according to their adequacy. Perhaps understandably, since the subjects were given only eleven minutes in which to write their responses, the percentage of adequate responses accounted for less than half the total protocols at each age level. For example, only 20.8% of the thirteen-year-olds' responses to the poem were judged adequate, while 43.6% of the seventeen-year-olds' responses to the short story were considered adequate. The qualitative component of the NAEP scoring guide usefully complements the criteria developed by Luchsinger and Sanders. The following is an example of the advice to scorers and associated criterion statements for the category of Engagement-Involvement:

> I Engagement-Involvement: What effect does the work have on me as an individual?
> Does the student find the work believable, are the characters good or bad, do they remind him of people he knows or the situations he has observed in life? Does he question the actions of characters as if they were real, insist that they do this or that? Does the student like the work? What sort of mood did it put him into? Is the response predominantly personal and subjective? The student might talk of his prejudices, his emotions, his thoughts, whatever.
> Scoring: Inadequate -- hardly articulate response.
> ("I don't like it.")
> Barely adequate -- describes the effect the work had on him without searching for the cause; or a vague description of student's mood upon finishing the work.

> Adequate -- statement of the effect the work had on student and a statement of the cause; vivid description of student's mood upon finishing the work; lively personal discussion.
> Superior -- effect the work had on student; clear statement of the cause; interesting and relevant personal discussion of the work or aspects of the work.

In 1965 the International Association for the Evaluation of Education Achievement (IEA) inaugurated cross-national surveys in six subject areas, one of which was literature. The resulting report, Literature Education in Ten Countries (Purves, Foshay and Hansson), appeared in 1973. Of the many factors involved in the study of literature, three interrelated aspects were chosen for investigation in the IEA study: (1) achievement: comprehension and interpretation, (2) patterns of response, and (3) attitudes toward reading and literature. These factors were in turn related to the cultural and pedagogical goals and practices of the participating countries. More specifically, the achievement scores, response preferences, and attitudes were correlated with personal, social, and academic factors which could be isolated for analysis, factors such as home background, community resources, curriculum designs, teacher qualifications, and school organization.

For the purposes of this study the most pertinent findings are those related to the students' patterns of response according to age level, and the cross-national contrasts derived from an analysis of these response patterns. The two school populations sampled were fourteen-year-olds and students in their pre-university year (roughly eighteen, but varying from country to country). All students selected the five questions they considered most important to ask about literature in general, about a common short story, and about one of three additional stories rotated randomly in each class. The instrument used was a Response Preference Questionnaire Form, a slightly modified version of which was used in this study, and appears in Appendix C. The committee's first hypothesis was that, over the three trials, individual students would select the same questions regardless of the story read. The data did not support this conclusion; fewer than half chose two of the five questions consistently, although over half chose one question over the three opportunities. On the other hand, fewer than 5% of students were reported as using the maximum range of fifteen questions.

This unexpected, but patent influence of stimulus on response patterns makes the search for an overall pattern of differences between fourteen and eighteen-year-olds almost impossible. Any generalizations concerning age patterns must be considered in relation to the second major hypothesis, which was upheld, namely that "a pattern of response . . . is an artifact of a student's culture." (314) As noted below, there is a stability in the patterns for American fourteen and eighteen-year-olds which distinguishes them from the age groups in other countries. For example, Chilean fourteen-year-olds exhibit no strong pattern of response. On the questionnaire their most popular responses were Perception of Literary Devices, Perception of Content, Formal Evaluation, Interpretation of a Part as Key to the Whole, and Interpretation of Form. Yet these preferences were inconsistently held as [illegible] students read the various stories. The critical focus of the Chilean eighteen-year-olds presents a clearer general pattern, though the lack of consistency remains across the selections. The older students are largely concerned with interpretive questions of human motivation and significance, with literary devices, and, to a lesser extent, with the effect and effectiveness of the selection. Since one of the stories used in the IEA study, "The Use of Force," was also used in this study, the results for the limited sample of Australian students are arrayed primarily against the patterns which the cross-national study unearthed for the three English speaking countries -- England, the United States, and New Zealand.

A number of important studies have investigated the response processes of readers of differing abilities. Piekarz (1956) discovered that a sixth-grade high-level reader responded with a greater total and variety of statements than a sixth-grade low-level reader. Her case studies also revealed that the high-level reader was more objective, less personally involved, and more active in searching for meaning beyond the literal. Rogers (1965) sought to investigate the individual differences in the interpretive processes of fourteen high-level readers and fourteen low-level readers at the eleventh grade. Again, it was found that superior readers are significantly better able to grasp the literal and implied meanings of a story, to understand symbolism and metaphor, to sense mood, and to understand the author's viewpoint. The advanced readers almost invariably delved below the surface of the story, whereas the poor readers merely recounted factual incidents and stated personal-opinions often unrelated to any valid appraisal of the story,

Letton (1958) found that high-level readers attached correct contextual meanings to words, made correct inferences, reflected greater uncertainty than low-level students, and tended to use their own vocabularies in responses. The low-level students often cut off further responses by stating an initial reluctance to respond further and tended to use the exact words of the poem in their responses. However, no significant differences were found between the two groups in their ability to note comparisons in a poem, to use relevant illustrations to explain a poem, or to relate personal experiences to a poem. Cooper (1969) found that reading ability was the most reliable indicator of differences in preferred mode of response. Students who chose the interpretive mode were significantly superior in reading ability to students who chose the evaluative mode. Stemmler (1966) compared the responses of highly creative secondary students with those of highly intelligent secondary students. The highly creative students' responses were based more on images, sensations, and role-playing while the highly intelligent readers tended to give more intellective or realistic responses.

Both Hansson (1973) and Vine (1970) made use of the semantic differential to compare the reactions of readers with different backgrounds or cognitive styles to poetry. Hansson used three groups of readers: experts (scholars or teachers of literature), university students studying literature, and skilled workers with only seven years of compulsory education behind them. Hansson noted a remarkable similarity among these three groups of readers. With the exception of the Simple-Complex scale, which registers formal qualities, the less educated readers could be said to possess a passive ability to judge the linguistic, literary, and experiential qualities of the poem which matched that of their specialist counterparts. The qualitative experience is only thrown into question when a need arises for the less educated group to verbalize their interpretations or experiences in written form. Vine found that readers with higher cognitive understanding were more able to respond affectively to both the negative and positive dimensions of concepts expressed in poetry than were readers with lower cognitive understandings. He also found that affective understandings of readers with high cognitive understanding are significantly richer and more intense before, during, and after the reading of poetry, and are less vacillatory as a result of reading poetry, than are the affective understandings of readers with lower cognitive understanding.

The study by Ring (1968), though directed to a reasonably select group of college preparatory seniors, echoes the findings of Richards, Squire, and others mentioned above. His informal analysis of free written responses to three stories unearthed a typical pattern: an initial short summary statement of narrative or thematic content followed by extensive descriptive-reiterative and interpretational comments about details of character behavior in the story, all of which is concluded with an evaluative comment. The brief opening statement often included a general evaluative statement revealing a personal affective response. More specifically, Ring's subjects frequently speculated about characters' feelings and past and future actions, moralistically criticized or approved character behavior, lapsed into personal associations triggered by the reading of the stories, and limited their evaluative comments largely to references to "realism" and "indefiniteness." The students rarely discussed the stories as works of art and rarely used the language of literary criticism. Perhaps most disturbingly, these advanced high-school seniors revealed a tendency to condemn a story because it presented a view of human nature they considered objectionable, a view counter to their own beliefs and experiences. Ring concludes that egocentrism is their greatest block to sound interpretation.

Further consideration should also be given to the findings of the IEA study, especially as they attempt to relate age-relevant responses to ability levels. Of most interest are the patterns for fourteen- and eighteen-year-olds as they emerge across national boundaries. Strong national differences allowed the investigators to conclude that literary response is in substantial part learned, but what seems to be most clearly influenced by patterns of schooling is the preferred mode of literary criticism. In the United States, for example, there are two dominant patterns of response which seem to remain stable between ages fourteen and eighteen. The first, a moral-symbolic approach, combines the subcategories of Interpretation of Style, Typological Interpretation, and Hortatory Interpretation in a quest for hidden meanings, general themes, and moral interpretation. The second, an affective-evaluative pattern, combines the subcategories of Reaction to Form, Hortatory Interpretation, and Affective Evaluation and may (the investigators suggest) be characteristic of the more able student. In England, on the other hand, there is some evidence in the pre-university sample of an aesthetic core, with a peripheral affective-interpretive group which seems to mark out the high achievers. Overall, the report notes a "remarkable commonality" in the preference patterns of the pre-university students toward formal and thematic responses. This is particularly clear in looking at those student who, across all populations studies, received a score of better than 27 out of 36 on a separate achievement measure. In a sense, this group represents those students whose level of response could be expected to be most advanced; their preferences were: (1) "Is there anything in the story that has a hidden meaning?" (chosen by 52 percent); (2) "What emotions does the story arouse in me?" (48 percent); (3) "How can we explain the way the characters behave?" (46 percent): (4) "Is the story about important things? Is it trivial or serious?" (36 percent); and (5) "Is there a lesson to be learned from the story?" (31 percent). Protocols of superior students in the present study have been carefully scrutinized for their conformity to this pattern.

In an intriguing coda to the IEA study the written responses of a select group of English honors students from England, New Zealand, and the United States were examined. The students wrote about Hemingway's short story, "The End of Something." When the essays were scored by paradigm three distinct patterns of response emerged: the English students favored Evaluation, the American students Interpretation, while the New Zealand students balanced Interpretation and Evaluation. Moreover, the Americans had a greater variety of responses than the English, who concentrated their responses in a limited number of the Purves categories. While the general absence of Engagement responses for older, more able students is supported by much of the research reviewed here, Purves and his colleagues were struck by the relatively small percentage of responses which disclosed an interest in the formal elements of Perception. Even allowing for the effect of the selected story, which is marked by Hemingway's characteristically sparse and open style, it might be expected that New Critical approaches would have had more effect on the students than the findings suggest. One obvious area for further research would be an attempt to relate these national patterns to the kinds of pedagogical practices to which the students had been exposed.

Although Adler (1971) did not address himself directly to this question, his study benefited from the fact that he had been one of the three readers who coded the corpus of 1500 essays in this component of the IEA study. He analyzed a sample of 200 essays written by the American Advanced Placement students in an effort to relate qualitative differences in the selected protocols to specified literary aspects of "The End of Something." Adler found that most of the students focused on one of four topics -- characterization, structure, style, or symbolism. Forty sample protocols dealing with each of these topics, together with a composite group of forty essays randomly selected with no regard for any specific topic, formed the data base for the study.

When three experienced readers rated the 200 essays using a modified version of the Diederich (1974) scale, the factor of Wording most significantly affected the quality of the essays. Other factors in rank order were: Quality of Ideas; Style; Flavor; Individuality; Organization; Relevance; Movement; and Development of Ideas. Also, the overall ranking by quality and by topic was as follows: (1)Symbolism; (2) Characterization; (3) Structure; (4) Style; and (5) Composite. Finally, Adler asked a group of experienced teachers to predict, from this list of five topics, the kind of emphasis likely to produce the highest quality essay on "The End of Something." Although these predictions did *not* parallel the rankings as measured by the Diederich scale, they did mirror the student choices of emphases most important to them as they studied literature. Anticipating one of the overall findings of the IEA study, Adler asked: "Have students learned the preferred choice of teachers and selected the topics accordingly?" (101)

Studies Employing Different Types of Stories or Poems

A parallel, primary interest in the present study is a comparison of the responses of the subjects to a short story and a poem to determine whether examples of the two genres elicit different kinds of response. There has been a proliferation of research undertaken to determine the kinds and characteristics of reading matter, especially fiction, considered interesting by boys and girls. Studies by Terman and Lima (1935), La Brant (1936), Thorndike (1946), Wollnar (1949), Whitehead (1956), Norvell (1958), Witty (1961), and Vaugn (1963) provide a sufficiently representative list. Almost as many studies, it sometimes seems, have been made to review this research, such as those by Robinson (1955), Furness (1963), Zimet (1966), and Squire (1969). Among the more pertinent general conclusions of these many studies are the following: intelligence is not a significant factor in the reading interests of adolescents, but sex is highly significant; in general, boys respond to action, adventure, humor, and suspense; girls to romance and sentiment, mystery, the familiar, and depictions of adolescent life. Squire (1969) notes one of the more interesting possibilities when he states that "the aesthetic quality of a selection does not necessarily stimulate a positive reader reaction." (524)

Comparatively few investigations have specifically studied the kinds and characteristics of short stories or poems preferred by adolescents. In an important study, Norvell (1958) tentatively concludes that stories of violent, physical adventure are much more often preferred by boys than by girls, but that the difference in preference is much less for stories of mild adventure. Boys like love stories far less than girls do, but again the difference is less significant for stories combining love and adventure or love and humor.

Simpson and Soares (1965) have certainly conducted the broadest research in the areas of best-liked and least-liked short stories. In their survey of 4,250 seventh, eighth, and ninth graders they found that the most popular stories possess the following characteristics: one central character, descriptions of persons, obscure authors, emphasis on plot as opposed to theme, omniscient narration, physical action, conflict, suspense, dialogue, sentimentality, clarity, and concrete language. Their general conclusion is that "stories which adults -- parents, teachers, librarians, and authors -- consider well-written are not necessarily interesting to junior high school students." (111)

In a related study of the attitudes of 1,635 junior-high-school students according to intelligence, sex, and grade, Soares and Simpson (1967) found that students of high intelligence appreciate short stories more than those of low intelligence, but that all students prefer the narrative type of story over the descriptive type. Students at each age and intelligence level prefer stories with realism and suspense, an attractive male teenager as the protagonist, and any type of conflict. In general, seventh graders reveal a wider range and greater intensity of interest than eighth or ninth graders. Soares discovered no pronounced sex differences, although boys prefer external conflict, girls internal conflict, and the girls show more preference for stories of love and courtship.

The influence of story type in eliciting different patterns of student response is further elaborated in the studies mentioned earlier by Luchsinger (1969), Somers (1972), Mertz (1972), Pollock (1972), and Purves, Foshay and Hansson (1973). A more difficult, theme-oriented story produced from Somers' grades seven, nine, and eleven students far more statements of Interpretation and far fewer statements of Evaluation than did a less difficult plot-oriented story. Contrary to Luchsinger's findings, the more complex story produced a greater variety and more even distribution of responses than did the less complex story. The studies by Mertz, Pollock, and Purves _et al._ made conscious use of a wide range of stories. The plausible results include the following: (1) reaction to stylistic aspects will increase the more unconventional the story's form; (2) the closer a story is to adolescent preoccupations the more likelihood there will be of an emphasis on engagement responses; and (3) there must be a felt need or desire to generalize before students will embark on extensive interpretation. While it is outside the realm of practicality to subject even a portion of the stories which have potential for use in the classroom to the type of empirical investigation employed in this and other studies, continued research of this nature may provide a typology of stories against which the classroom teacher could measure his choices.

Most of the major investigations of response to poetry come under the general rubric of appreciation studies. Eppel's (1950) study represents a characteristic line of enquiry in which students are given a number of poetic extracts in which a line or lines are missing. The subject's task is to fill in the gaps by selecting the "best" line from a list including the original and a number of artificially weakened variants. Eppel found a steady and highly significant increase in total score with students ranging in age from thirteen to graduate school. A variation on this procedure is Gunn's (1951) attempt to isolate factors in the appreciation of poetry. Subjects drawn from the third, fourth, and fifth forms in English schools, together with a group of undergraduates, read a series of nineteen poems and rated them according to a list of nine factors which Gunn felt might influence appreciation. The findings of the study suggest that two factors influence response: a general factor which includes emotional effect, mode of expression, and appeal of the subject; and a bipolar factor which contrasts rhythm, word music, and rhyme with emotional effect, appeal of the subject, comprehension, and mental imagery.

While still not grounding themselves in written protocols, the studies by Britton (1954) and Harding (1968) provide compelling evidence that steadily increasing familiarity with poetry is in itself an aid to discrimination. Britton's subjects were presented with actual and "counterfeit" poems and asked to arrange them in order of preference. After an interval of between four and six months a definite tendency emerged, in the subjects' second ranking of the poems, for preferences to converge on the "true" poems. In rather similar terms Harding defined the reading of poetry (for the sake of his experiment) as "practice at a task," in which "understanding" and "liking" interpenetrate to create an apprehension of poetic merit. His undergraduate subjects ranked twenty-six poems in two separate ranking episodes, separated by a week, on a scale that ran from extreme difficulty, but containing the potential for extended study, to an extreme absence of personal appeal. Harding concluded that even over the space of a single week his subjects exhibited more stable personal judgments in the absence of common norms for ranking the poems.

Mason (1974) used the written responses of adolescents to a range of poetry in an attempt to validate research into adolescent cognitive processes, and to supplement knowledge of adolescent responses to poetry, particularly with regard to the quality of understanding shown in the protocols. Two groups of poems were selected for the study, with differentiation between poems which were predominantly affective in content, and poems which were more logical or referential. The responses were ordered into a qualitative hierarchy of six categories: (1) lack of comprehension, which included statements of a failure to understand the poem or complete irrelevancies; (2) circumstantial responses which contained repetitions of content with no conceptualization, elaborations of an irrelevant or idiosyncratic nature, or errors signifying a complete logical or affective misunderstanding; (3) responses of affective possibility, indicating the basis of a future, more mature response; (4) responses of cognitive possibility marked by the occasional logical or referential element; (5) responses of generalization, or attempts at understanding the poem as a whole; and (6) explanatory responses, which resulted in hypotheses combining affective, cognitive, and generalizing statements which would provide a basis for personal and wider applications.

The more general findings of Mason's study provide support for the rather more detailed listing of problems experienced by adolescents in the reading of literature as provided by Taba and Squire. Among other things, the study suggests: that there is no relationship between ability to judge in poetry and the capacity to write abstractly; that intelligent readers are capable of grasping the ideational content of poems, but are less capable of responding to affective demands; that older students, with a similar "dissociation of sensibility," consider simple poems less deserving of personal involvement; that different methods of evoking responses to poetry will provide different responses; and that, therefore, written responses will be neither a completely accurate guide to adolescent understanding of poetry, nor a complete guide to response.

The studies by Lewis (1972) and Cornaby (1974) appear to draw together the threads in much of the preceding discussion because each attempts to chart adolescent responses to a range of media and literary forms. In each case a short story and a poem were paired with two different sets of stimuli. Lewis, using the Squire system of content analysis, coded the written responses of 109 grade-ten students to a narrative and a lyric film, as well as to a short story and a lyric poem. Since the focus of Lewis' analysis was on the difference in responses to the films as opposed to the literature, few specific contrasts can be drawn for the short story as opposed to the poem. Probably the study's most notable conclusion was that students interpret film significantly more than they interpret literature. Yet some of Lewis' correlational evidence suggests that students find it much harder to judge, interpret, narrate, make associations with, become involved in, and prescribe courses of action for the poem than to perform the same set of operations for the short story. This set of disjunctions occurred within the framework of student response to lyric materials (poem and film) as contrasted with their response to narrative materials (short story and film.)

Cornaby, on the other hand, investigated the influence of form on the responses of high-school seniors in college-preparatory classes to two dissimilar novels, a short story, and a poem. Her major interest was whether the students displayed a consistent pattern of response over the three genres. Cornaby's primary instrument was Purves' (1973) Response Preference Measure in which she recoded ten of the twenty questions as predominantly form questions, and ten of the twenty questions as predominantly content questions. For the purposes of the study a distinction was drawn between traditional and nontraditional literary forms. A Passage to India was considered more nontraditional and Crime and Punishment more traditional as novel stimuli. Also, the poem "Locked In" was considered more nontraditional than the short story "The Use of Force" because of the more pronounced style commonly associated with poetry and because of the use of free verse within the selected poem. Overall, subjects favored content responses for the traditional novel and form responses for the poem. When results between the short story and the poem were analyzed, significant differences were observed for the form-content dichotomy. One-fifth of the subjects consistently chose a form response mode for the two selections, two-fifths of the subjects consistently chose a content mode, and two-fifths of the subjects changed their response mode between the story and the poem.

Effect of Context on Response

A comparatively small number of researchers have attempted to investigate the effects of context and a sense of audience on response patterns. Ehrenkranz (1973) compared the oral responses to poetry given by fifteen- and sixteen-year-old students in three differently directed interview situations; affectively-oriented, cognitively-oriented, and nondirective. She found that readers who were affectively directed responded with highly significant frequencies of remarks she classified as "personal association" and "factual narration," while the cognitively directed group favored categories called "thematic interpretation" and "technical approach." By contrast, the non-directed group replied with statements from all four categories in about equal proportion. Ehrenkranz concluded that prereading orientation in a specific direction narrowed the range of student response, whereas a nondirective treatment allowed the student freedom to self-structure reactions and widened the areas of concern contained in students' responses.

Using only the four major categories of the Purves schema, Mertz (1972) provided comparable groups of students with alternative versions of a response form, one reflecting a school context, and the other reflecting an informal context. She found that the school context students selected Perception and Interpretation, or those activities the students associated with the English class, while the informal context group selected Engagement -- the category which deals with their personal involvement in the story.

This tendency is corroborated in Haught's (1970) finding that there is more personal identification with characters, situations, and truths in literature when students discuss in teacher-less small groups. Perhaps Kammann(1966) provides the most disturbing set of suggestions. He discovered that, when given a number of options of subject matter, students tended to choose a more complex text to explore with their peers. If told that they were to discuss the literature with their teacher, their choices converged on a range of simpler texts. Additionally, student interest declined if they thought they would have to read the text for the teacher, and rose again when their anxiety about the assignment was reduced.

Phillips (1971) and Barnes _et al._ (1971) have used the technique of recording nonteacher-directed discussions of poems and novels to isolate elements in the expressed response which characterize the informal context. Phillips' ten- and eleven-year-olds made considerable use of "presenting" and "picturing" responses, either proferring their own personal experiences or building up a visual image of objects, people, or places, before they ventured into interpretations. Similarly, Barnes' fifteen-year-olds engaged in a great deal of "sorting-out" or "reexperiencing" talk, both aimed at clarifying elements of a plot or confirming elements of motivation, before they were ready to see the work as an artifact and grant it its own virtual existence.

Summary

Studies of the expressed responses to literature by students of various ages have gained an important sense of direction in recent years through (1) the writings of a number of theoreticians and scholars who insist that such responses be seen as the inevitable and individual outcomes of the interaction of reader and text, and (2) the application of two significant, if somewhat contradictory, systems of content analysis developed by Squire (1964) and Purves (1968). In global terms the results of such studies have shown: (1) that students prefer to respond to content, rather than the form or style, of what they read;

(2) that they often respond superficially and imperceptively, missing important implications; and (3) that there is a general tendency, with maturity or schooling (or both), for adolescents to abandon a preference for emotional and evaluative responses in favor of more perceptional and interpretive responses.

There remain, however, some notable inconsistencies, at both the broad and finer levels of categorized responses, which suggest that these global movements are a function of at least the following variables: the literary selections themselves, especially if they represent different genres; the sex and ability of the reader; the context in which the responses occur; and the expectations of students and teachers in different cultural settings. The study reported in the following chapters takes account of each of these variables, and attempts, as well, to judge the adequacy of the responses of groups of students drawn from each of three grade levels in a sample of Australian secondary schools.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The major purpose of this investigation was to determine the extent to which the responses of students at different age levels exhibited quantitative and qualitative differences with respect to examples of two literary genres. The study proposed to analyze and compare the free written responses of superior and average readers from grades eight, ten, and twelve to a short story, "The Use of Force" by William Carlos Williams, and a poem, "Corner" by Ralph Pomeroy. Using the categories and subcategories developed by Purves (1968) for coding written responses, the investigation set out to describe in detail the responses of the students to the short story and the poem, to determine the nature and extent of changes in responses that occurred from one grade level to the next, and to identify the extent to which relationships among the variables of category and subcategory percentages, sex, and ability (as designated by the subjects' teachers) were apparent. In addition, it was acknowledged that content analysis, and the use of mean percentages of responses, provided restricted information on group tendencies. Therefore, a subjective inspection of individual protocols was employed in order to assess the quality of age-relevant patterns of response in an attempt to isolate both characteristic and atypical indicators of a developmental process.

Hypotheses and Testing Procedures

After all protocols had been coded, the numbers of responses in each category and subcategory for each student and for each piece of literature were entered onto Fortran Coding Sheets. These data on individual student responses were then transferred onto cards which formed the basis for computer analysis.

There were five specific areas of enquiry which lent themselves to statistical analysis, and the development of formal hypotheses: (1) the response patterns across grade levels for the combined pieces of literature; (2) the response patterns across grade levels for the story and poem taken separately; (3) the response patterns of the total numbers of students, or the grade-level groups of students, to the story as compared with the poem; (4) the response patterns of the total or grade-level groups of male and female students to the story and poem combined, or to the story and poem taken separately; and (5) the response patterns of the total or grade-level groups of superior and average students to the story and poem combined, or to the story and poem taken separately.

The questions which formed the basis of the quantitative analysis together with their appropriate hypotheses were as follows:

Question 1: Are there significant differences across grade levels in the patterns of response made by students to the combined pieces of literature?

Hypothesis 1: No significant differences will occur in the Purves categories or subcategories of response made by students to the combined pieces of literature, across grade levels or between any pair of grade levels.

Question 2: Are there significant differences across grade levels in the patterns of response made by students to the short story and the poem taken separately?

Hypothesis 2a: No significant differences will occur in the Purves categories or subcategories of response to "The Use of Force" made by students across grade levels, or between all pairs of grade levels.

Hypothesis 2b: No significant differences will occur in the Purves categories or subcategories of response to "Corner" made by students across grade levels, or between all pairs of grade levels.

Question 3: Are there significant differences in the patterns of response made by the total numbers of students, or the grade-level groups of students, to the story as compared with the poem?

Hypothesis 3: No significant differences will occur in the Purves categories or subcategories of response to "The Use of Force" as compared with "Corner" made by the total numbers of students, or by the grade-level groups of students.

Question 4: Are there significant differences in the response patterns of the groups of male and female students to the story and poem combined, or to the story and poem taken separately -- at each grade level or overall?

Hypothesis 4: No significant differences will occur in the Purves categories or subcategories of response made by the total, or grade-level groups of male and female students to "The Use of Force" and "Corner" combined, or to "The Use of Force" and "Corner" taken separately.

Question 5: Are there significant differences in the response patterns of the groups of superior and average students to the story and poem combined, or to the story and poem taken separately -- at each grade level or overall?

Hypothesis 5: No significant differences will occur in the Purves categories or subcategories of response made by the total, or grade-level groups of superior and average students to "The Use of Force" and "Corner" combined, or to "The Use of Force" and "Corner" taken separately.

In testing these hypotheses a series of one way analyses of variance were applied to the group and subgroup mean percentages to determine the significance of the differences for grade, category, and subcategory, as well as for the comparisons by sex and ability. A series of subsequent Scheffé tests were used to determine the significance of the differences between all three pairs of grade levels for both categories and subcategories. In all comparisons explored in the study, a probability of .05 was used as the level of significance.*

The Response Preference Questionnaire

A Response Preference Questionnaire, adapted from the instrument used in the IEA study, was employed to gain further information on the subjects' preferred (or expected) modes of response to short stories and poems in a school setting, and to literature in general encountered in an out-of-school setting. The purpose of this questionnaire was to extend the scope of the discussion generated in the main study's use of a single short story and a single poem to the subjects' perceptions of matters generally considered important when examples of the two genres were dealt with in class. In addition, the questionnaire sought to further extend the contextual issue raised in the study by seeking information on questions considered more or less important when the subjects discussed any form of literature with their friends.

The form of this instrument (see Appendix C) differed in certain important ways from the measure employed in the IEA study. First, questions were framed to incorporate all twenty-four of Purves' subcategories, with the appropriate coding numbers heading each question, e.g. "220: What kinds of metaphors, images, or other writer's devices are used in the story/poem/literature in general?" Second, instead of limiting choices to the five questions considered most important, students were asked to rank ten questions in the order of their importance over the three trials -- short stories in class, poems in class, and any literature with your friends. This rather more explicit attempt to generate a wider range of favored questions was paralleled by a request that students list the five questions considered least important in each of the three contexts. These procedures led to the assembly of a wider range of questions which qualified as consciously preferred or rejected for the students sampled in the study.

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* Data analysis was performed on a DEC-10 computer at James Cook University of North Queensland. Dr. R.B. Baldauf, Jr. wrote a series of programs for analysis of variance with repeated measures, which also incorporated subsequent Scheffé tests for the comparisons of grade-level means for categories and subcategories.

Approximately two weeks after the writing of the free response protocols the investigator returned to the individual classrooms to supervise the administration of the Response Preference Questionnaire. Both eligible and ineligible students in the intact classes completed the "Answer Sheet For Literature Preferences" after the "Instruction Sheet" had been read aloud. (See Appendix C.) Subsequently, the answer sheets of eligible students were withdrawn, and the rank orders for preferred and rejected subcategories were tabulated by grade level for (1) poems encountered in a school-setting; (2) short stories encountered in a school-setting; and (3) any literature encountered in an out-of-school setting.

Qualitative Analysis of Protocols

These quantitative concerns, grounded in the data of group and sub-group means, or a rank ordering of preferred and rejected subcategories, were intended to identify significant changes in the patterns of response as they occurred with respect to the total groups of students, or to smaller groups identified by grade, sex, or ability. In order to embed these quantitative findings in the flux of actual student writing, a qualitative analysis of representative protocols was carried out. This exercise was, of course, limited by the fact that only two writing samples were obtained from individual students.

The tentative questions which guided this aspect of the study were, in part, a legacy of prior research, in part a recognition of the need to capture the unique features of the Purves system which influenced the results, and in part a pattern of expectations related to the dual audience specified in the study. The overarching question in this analysis had been suggested by Purves himself:

> To what extent can the papers of students of different ages and ability levels be subjectively approached according to the criteria of "the accuracy of the perception," "the cogency of the interpretation," "the persuasiveness of the evaluative position," and "the intensity of the testament of engagement?" (Purves, 1968, 59)

Qualitative analysis of the protocols of superior and average students gained a related sense of direction from the findings of Purves, Foshay, and Hansson (1973) in the IEA study. These researchers had inspected the response preferences of students who were high achievers on an objective measure of literary response. Their findings suggested that the more able students combined affective responses with evaluative and interpretive stances. An affective-evaluative pattern characterized the superior English students, while an affective-interpretive pattern marked the superior American sample.

The subjective analysis also involved scoring selected essays by paradigm, a separate analytic procedure recommended by Purves and

Rippere (1968, 54-57). This entailed a focus on the major thrust or concern of the essay, as opposed to the classification of separate statements by category or subcategory. In addition, the use of paradigmatic analysis allowed qualitative judgments according to the technique devised for that purpose by the NAEP (1973) study. (See Appendix D)

Broad descriptions of both the adequacies and inadequacies of student response, as indicated in Chapter Two, have appeared in the studies by Richards(1929), Loban (1954), Squire (1964), Ring (1968) and others. Yet none of these investigations had addressed itself to an age range as wide as the one employed in this study. Therefore, the protocols of average and superior students were examined with the purpose of establishing developmentally relevant continua within the stances of Engagement, Perception, Interpretation, and Evaluation.

Finally, the deliberate attempt to specify a wide audience of teacher and peer group for the students' writing may have affected the language mode in which individual students chose to discuss the works. An attempt was therefore made to examine the protocols within the terms of the discourse taxonomy developed by the London Writing Research Unit. (Britton, et al., 1975) Since it was felt that the set of function categories (Transactional, Expressive, Poetic) for writing which distinguishes the uses of language in the role of participant and in the role of spectator may have parallels within the Purves categories and subcategories, a series of related questions guided this enquiry:

> To what extent are students, irrespective of ability level, able to internalize the demands of a dual audience? Is there any evidence of writing in the expressive-poetic band which is comparatively free of the rules of use associated with transactional writing? Is there any difference in the way students treat the story and poem as consciously structured "verbal objects," as Harding's (1962) "accepted technique for discussing the chances of life?"

The qualitative analysis, therefore, involved the following parallel steps. First, the investigator read and re-read all of the protocols, noting with each re-reading groups of response statements or complete protocols which represented typical or intrinsically interesting trends within Purves' categories of Engagement, Perception, Interpretation, and Evaluation. The overall aim was to assemble illustrative material which would stand as evidence of a developmental process across the grade levels, isolate the distinguishing features in the responses of students labelled superior or average by their teachers, or provide an insight into the overall analytic power of the Purves and Rippere system. At the same time, the protocols were carefully scrutinized for any stylistic or substantive elements which would tend to indicate that the students had accepted the invitation to address their responses as much to the peer group as to the teacher.

The Selection of the Short Story and the Poem

The selection of the short story and the poem to be used in the study involved the consideration of criteria established by Squire (1964): literary quality, relation to certain adolescent experiences, lack of familiarity, appropriate level of complexity, and a capacity for eliciting a wide range of responses from students aged thirteen to eighteen. Additional factors, considered rather more relevant to the story than the poem, were length and readability.*

The selected story, "The Use of Force" by William Carlos Williams, not only met these criteria but had also been used in a number of other studies of response to literature: the IEA study, and the smaller-scale studies by Purves (1968), Ring (1968), Mertz (1972), and Cornaby (1974). Since the story had already been used in such a wide range of contexts it was felt that it would represent the short story genre in a non-biased, objective fashion far better than a selection with a lesser currency of use. Perhaps more importantly, results from the present study were arrayed directly against the findings of Purves' content analysis of the protocols written by American students aged thirteen and seventeen. While the IEA study relied only on a Response Preference Questionnaire, it was still possible to construct, for the Australian sample used in this study, patterns of preferred response to "The Use of Force" which were incidentally compared with the results obtained for fourteen- and eighteen-year-olds in the three English-speaking countries of the IEA study -- the United States, England, and New Zealand.

"The Use of Force" is a brief account of a doctor's examination of a child's sore throat. The child resists the doctor's attempts and the parents' pleadings until the doctor in his frustration and with rising anger forcibly and brutally examines the child's throat to find that she has diphtheria. Because of the innocence and stubbornness of the child, the role of the parents, and the anger of the doctor, the story elicits a strong response and involvement from the reader.

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* The Dale-Chall (1948) formula for readability places "The Use of Force" at a 5th-6th grade level.

The story also possesses an interesting form: little supplementary background information is provided; the story is a single concentrated incident; the doctor serves as narrator of the story and the events are told from his perspective. The language is simple, direct, and economical. No quotation marks are used to enclose portions of the speech. Near the beginning, the language of the doctor seems almost perfunctory and sterile except for his personal thoughts, but the language becomes more intense as the doctor's anger grows and his examination becomes more brutal.

The selection of a single poem proved far more difficult and less defensible on grounds such as the criterion of prior use. However, certain additional criteria helped to inform the final selection. For example, it was deemed necessary that the poem incorporate at least a potential for student response across a wide range of the subcategories provided by Purves. This stipulation, which attempted to guarantee comparability at the subcategory level, recommended the use of a narrative as opposed to a brief lyric, or other unique poetic forms such as haiku, cinquain, or even the sonnet or the ode. Again, the poem needed to be sufficiently representative of the genre to invite considerably more attention to intrinsic matters of language -- imagery, connotation, rhythm, metaphor, symbolism, and so on. Certainly, as well, the combination of the properties of form, content, and language needed to be mixed in such proportions as to render the poem at least accessible to thirteen-year-olds, and yet not lead to rejection by a group of seventeen-year-old readers.

These additional considerations led to the still somewhat arbitrary selection of "Corner" by Ralph Pomeroy. This free-verse narrative is thematically similar to "The Use of Force." The conflict again involves the generations, though the symbolic confrontation between a motorcycle cop and a levi-clad youth is less overt and located within the consciousness of the narrator. A potentially explosive situation fizzles in the final stanza as the cop "blasts off, quick as a craver,/Smug in his power . . . ." Although the language of the poem is simple and contemporary, Pomeroy has employed a range of literary devices which present an opportunity for close analysis for the reader so inclined.

Although few means exist for determining students' familiarity with a given piece of literature prior to its inclusion in a study, limited investigation indicated that the likelihood of a student's having previously read "The Use of Force" or "Corner" was small. The most obvious source for this information was the teacher. None of the teachers reported having taught either the story or the poem. In addition, only one student reported having read "The Use of Force" before, while only two reported that they had read "Corner."

The Selection of the Sample

The subjects selected for the study included eighth, tenth, and twelfth grade students drawn from four secondary schools in Townsville, Queensland, Australia. Townsville itself, with a population of approximately 85,000, is a classicial regional growth centre. Basically a port city serving a vast tropical hinterland, Townsville's economy is extremely diversified. Some consequent inequities in the range of distribution of wealth are paralleled by a range of educational advantage across the schools themselves. With respect to the Public Schools, for example, which operate within the framework of a centralized educational system, Townsville is separated by over 1,000 miles from the State capital, and by over 2,000 miles from the Federal capital. The usual legacies of considerable distances from the centralized Education Departments are in evidence -- a diminished range of resources, and a disturbing pattern of teacher mobility resulting from frequent transfers. The Independent Schools, on the other hand, have a sounder financial base, draw a more homogeneous, economically advantaged student population, and possess a more stable teaching force.

Total enrollments in Townsville secondary schools in 1977 amounted to approximately 7,100 students. About 70% of these students attended one of three State High Schools (Grades Eight to Twelve), while the remaining 30% attended one of five considerably smaller Independent Schools. In the selection of schools and students to participate in the study it was not possible to employ exact sampling procedures which would mirror these divisions in the accessible population. However, the four schools finally selected provide a close approximation of the range of school settings, and an equal distribution by sex and ability for two of the variables chosen for study. Students were obtained from two of the coeducational State High Schools (Schools A and B), an Independent Catholic Boys' College (School C), and an Independent Anglican Girls' College (School D).

The selection of students from grades eight, ten, and twelve was entirely purposeful. First, grades eight and twelve represent the initial and final years of secondary schooling in Australia, so that expected changes in the response patterns would reflect in large measure the results of literature education at the high school level. Grade ten was then chosen as the obvious mid-point which would make it possible to chart finer details of movement throughout the grades. In addition, both the United States NAEP study and the cross-national IEA study had employed large samples of students in the thirteen to fourteen, and seventeen to eighteen age ranges, which provided data bases against which the results obtained for the Australian sample could be compared.

A total of 120 subjects made up the complete sample with forty students selected from each of grades eight, ten, and twelve. In each of the four participating schools, the English Subject Master/Mistress, in consultation with the classroom teacher of English, nominated five superior students and five average students from intact classes at the relevant grade levels for inclusion in the study. The teacher nomination procedure also provided for equal representation of males and females at each grade and ability level.

The decision to rest selection of the eligible subjects on the teacher was the result of a number of factors closely related to the purposes of the study. On one level, the combined evidence of prior research (e.g. Letton, 1958, and Stemmler, 1966) suggested that no single objective measure, or complex of measures, would be totally adequate for the recognition of the superior student of literature. In fact, this investigator was confident that the experience and judgment of the range of teachers involved in the process would go beyond the explicit criteria generated by standardized reading scores or marks in particular English courses. For this reason teachers were asked to list the criteria which informed their nomination of superior students. As an end result, therefore, the combined evidence of these criteria could be set against the results of both quantitative and qualitative analysis to shed further light on the characteristics of students' written responses to literature most valued by their teachers.

Table 3 provides a breakdown of the cells for the 120 students forming the study's main sample by school, sex, grade, and ability level.

TABLE 3

SAMPLE OF STUDENTS BY SCHOOL, GRADE, SEX
AND ABILITY LEVEL
(N=120)

	SCHOOL A		SCHOOL B		SCHOOL C		SCHOOL D	
Gr.8	2 S/M 3 S/F	3 A/M 2 A/F	3 S/M 2 S/F	2 A/M 3 A/F	5 S/M -	5 A/M -	- 5 S/F	- 5 A/F
Gr. 10	3 S/M 2 S/F	2 A/M 3 A/F	2 S/M 3 S/F	3 A/M 2 A/F	5 S/M -	5 A/M -	- 5 S/F	- 5 A/F
Gr. 12	3 S/M 2 S/F	2 A/M 3 A/F	2 S/M 3 S/F	3 A/M 2 A/F	5 S/M -	5 A/M -	- 5 S/F	- 5 A/F

S/M = Superior males
A/M = Average males
S/F = Superior females
A/F = Average females

Collection of Data

During the data-gathering phase of this study, the nominated students were enrolled in a total of eighteen English classes taught by eight different teachers. In each of the two State High Schools (Schools A and B) two eighth-grade classes, two tenth-grade classes, and two twelfth-grade classes were sampled, while in the two Independent Colleges (Schools C and D) only single classes at each of the three grade levels were provided. The State High Schools were represented by six teachers; the Independent Colleges by one teacher each.

The procedure for data-gathering was fraught with several problems which required a series of significant decisions. In order to preclude teacher influence, which might have introduced undesirable variables into the study, it was decided that the investigator himself would conduct the eighteen classes on the days during which the protocols were written. It was also decided that all of the students in each class would participate in the reading and responding, with only the papers of the nominated students being ultimately subjected to statistical analysis. This decision was primarily the result of a directive from the State Regional Office of Education which insisted that a condition of the investigation be that the students themselves be not made aware of their having been typed "superior" or "average" by their teachers. In the face of this reasonable expectation, intact classes would have been used in any case, because of the absence of adequate space for the nominated students to write, and by a desire to maintain the routine classroom environment as far as possible. In addition, it was felt that such a situation may have enhanced the possibility of the students directing their writing to the dual audience which was specified.

For the participating classes, the data-gathering phase of the study occupied partial or complete periods on three consecutive days. The primary consideration was that having the students respond to both the story and poem in one sitting would have invited possible interference across the genres. Further, the writing phases were so arranged that half the students wrote first about "The Use of Force," and half the students wrote first about "Corner." On the first day, in the last few minutes of the English period, the students were introduced to the general nature of the study and provided with a mimeographed copy of the story or the poem. At this stage the students were simply given the following oral explanation:

> Tomorrow, in class, you will be asked to write about the story/poem. You may start reading the literature in what is left of the period, and finish your reading tonight if necessary. Please don't discuss the story/poem with anyone. You may read the story/poem as often as you like, and make whatever notes you feel might be helpful for tomorrow's writing.

On the following day, the students were supplied with writing paper and directed to write their first response paper according to the following written directions:

> You will have as much of the period as you need to write about the story/poem distributed yesterday. Remember this is NOT a test and has nothing to do with the marks in your present English class. Therefore, please imagine that you are writing as much for other members of the class as for a teacher. What you write is entirely up to you, but do try to make your work as honest, serious, and complete as possible.

In the first writing phase a number of students expressed dismay at the absence of specific directions, and the accompanying directive to write as much for the peer group as for the teacher.

Questions on both counts were evaded by a reiteration that more specific directions would interfere with the precise nature of the study. It is important to emphasize that at all stages the researcher avoided in his directions to students such words as "thoughts," "feelings," "reactions," or "opinions," which might have led students toward a given mode of response.

Prior arrangements had been made for all students to bring to class other reading materials which they could turn to on completion of their own writing, so as not to disturb other students who were continuing with their written responses. At the end of the first writing phase, the sequence of procedures just outlined was repeated with regard to the appropriate alternate piece of literature.

Part of the rationale for using two response periods separated by at least twenty-four hours has been alluded to above. To repeat, it was considered necessary to isolate the writing phases for the short story and the poem. Also, a single class period (ranging from forty-five to fifty minutes) would have been totally inadequate for the provision of a full response to both pieces of literature by the older, more able students. Moreover, the final opting for delayed as opposed to immediate responses, even to the extent of allowing the students to take home the short story and the poem, was brought about by the disappointing results of the pilot study conducted with approximately equal numbers of Canadian students.*

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* It was the original intent of the study to use a sample of Canadian students as the data-base. However, the bulk of the grade-eight protocols were lost in transit to Australia, rendering the formal use of the Canadian data unfeasible. As indicated in the body of this report, a preliminary analysis of the surviving data suggested procedural improvements in the design of this study.

The immediate responses of these Canadian students evinced a shallowness and restriction, brought on by the limited writing period, which restricted in turn the potential offered for qualitative analysis. This general lack of "adequacy" had also been commented on in the NAEP (1973) report, and in the findings of Ring (1968) and Somers (1972). In discussing the differences between delayed and immediate responses, Slatoff (1970) argues that the former -- while probably less immediate and less sensitive to the complex impressions of the moment -- seem richer, more meaningful, and even more pleasurable. In the extreme, both Britton (1954) and Harding (1968) have shown that the giving-of-meaning is a long, contemplative process, involving significant developments over time. Certainly, as well, the students may have discussed the literature with their parents or peers, though very few admitted to having done so. In any event, these discussions would have occurred in an out-of-class context, mirroring concerns for an audience other than the teacher.

Even though the responses in this study were more considered than those in investigations where students are required to provide immediate reactions, the form of the response remained free and unstructured. There was no conscious, direct manipulation on the part of the researcher beyond the full and adequate provision of a time period which would allow each student the opportunity to attend as much to the phrasing of the response as to the elements of the response itself.

Data-collection over the eighteen classes involved in the study consumed virtually the whole period from mid-September to mid-October, 1977. This timing was particularly useful in that student writing occurred towards the end of the Australian academic year after an almost completed course of instruction for each of grades eight, ten, and twelve. Only three substitutions of superior students had to be made as a result of absences on one or other of the days set aside for student writing.

The attitude of the students during the period of data-collection was generally good. Virtually all of the subjects read and responded to the literature with interest and seriousness. However, some lack of cooperation was encountered in two of the tenth-grade classes, one in School A and one in School C. Most of the problems arising were confined to students ineligible for participation. Further, it was rare for any of the eighth-grade classes to spend more than half the available time on writing their responses. Most of these younger students had finished within fifteen to twenty-five minutes.

Coding the Responses

After the 240 response papers -- two for each subject -- had been collected, they were subjected to content analysis using the categories and subcategories developed by Purves and Rippere (1968). In particular, the directives given by Rippere in her Appendix to their work were followed in the coding process.

The basic counting unit in the analysis of protocols was the response statement, which Rippere describes as "anything that is set off by its own terminal punctuation, including sentence fragments and epithets." (68) On this level, then, "Fie! No quotation marks!" would be scored as two statements. However, where the writer of a protocol did not set off statements which were, in Hunt's (1965) words, "grammatically capable of being terminated with a capital letter and a period (21)," the procedure was to separate these and mark them as discrete response statements. Clauses joined by co-ordination were also separated, but subordinate clauses showing cause or condition were not. The guiding principle employed in this study was that the response statement, though similar to Hunt's linguistic T-unit, is often a deliberately patterned entity, and must be coded on the basis of its subject matter, its deliberate attempt "to convey meanings, nuances, and relationships," (Rippere, 1968, 68)

The degree of precision required by the individual researcher is reflected in the number of response statements which simple, compound, and complex sentences can be made to yield. For example, Grindstaff (1968) illustrates how she would divide this sentence (written as she found it) into three response units: "I feel this story could of had two different meanings -- /Finney's peace/ and Gene's peace." (79) In the present study the entire sentence would have been coded as one response statement. Alternatively, Michalak (1976) scored the sentence "They want to help their child, but don't want to hurt them." (125) as one statement, whereas in this study the co-ordinate conjunction would have required the sentence to be recorded as two response statements. The following sentence, which yielded three response statements, provides a fairly typical indication of the procedures used in this study: "At first his course of attack is by using persuasive gentleness,/^{1} but after that the child hits him viciously,/^{2} and the parents inflame the situation by saying 'He won't hurt you.'"/^{3}

The reader is referred to Rippere's (1968) Appendix, "The Practical Reader" (67-87), for examples of the ways in which statements can be classified according to such lexical and semantic features as the use of key words (like "tone"), the modality and tenses of verbs, the cues contained in certain adjectives and adverbs, the use of the definite and indefinite articles, and the treatment of interrogative statements and indirect questions. In spite of the flexibility implied by Rippere, when the nature of the response and the characteristics of the writer are taken into account, it was necessary to make a number of additional operational decisions. For example, the frequent use of independent clauses separated by "and" resulted in each of these independent clauses being scored as a separate statement. Fragments, as well, were considered separately only if they were deemed intentional. With respect to the poem, in particular, quotations were usually not scored separately from the context of the developing argument in which they occurred.

After the total number of statements for each paper had been determined, the next step required the coding of each statement according to the Purves categories and subcategories. This proved a time-consuming process, demanding the complete familiarity of the researcher with the system, and the double-checking of a total of 4,010 statements after certain intervals to ensure accuracy and consistency.

The following sample protocols will serve as examples of the procedures used in separating response statements, and the coding procedures actually used in the study. Sample A was written about the story by an average grade-eight student, while Sample B is the response of a superior grade-twelve student to the poem.

Sample A

I think the story was very moving./[1] It was a very good description of the doctor's thoughts./[2] The story made me feel as if I was in the room/[3] and I could feel the tensions of the doctor./[4] It shows very well how the parents felt about the child, their love for her and how much they didn't want any one to hurt her./[5] The story tells how the girl didn't want any one to know how sick she was and how the parents were worried that she might have some terrible disease./[6]

It gives a clear description of what sort of people they were, where they live and how they speak./[7] The story tells how furstrated the mother was getting,/[8] she kept saying "He's a nice man, he won't hurt you./[9] These were beginning to annoy the doctor after awhile./[10] At one stage the doctor nearly killed the child because she would not let him look down her throat, so he had to use force./[11] First he used a wooden spoon/[12] but she broke it so he used a metal spoon,/[13] by this time you could feel the doctors emotions./[14]

I think the author was trying to get across that in some cases, such as the one described in the story, that there is a need for force/[15] although some people say it is not needed at all I'm sure even they would use it in this type of situation./[16]

On the whole I thoroughly enjoyed the story/[17] and for some reason I really enjoyed writing about it./[18]

Coding:

Response Statement		Subcategory	Category
1	410:	Affective Evaluation	Evaluation
2	420:	Evaluation of Method	Evaluation
3	130:	Reaction to Content	Engagement
4	130:	Reaction to Content	Engagement
5	400:	Evaluation General	Evaluation
6	230:	Perception of Content	Perception
7	420	Evaluation of Method	Evaluation
8	320:	Interpretation of Content	Interpretation
9	230:	Perception of Content	Perception
10	230:	Perception of Content	Perception
11	230:	Perception of Content	Perception
12	230:	Perception of Content	Perception
13	230:	Perception of Content	Perception
14	130:	Reaction to Content	Engagement
15	350:	Hortatory Interpretation	Interpretation
16	500:	Miscellaneous	Miscellaneous
17	100:	Engagement General	Engagement
18	500:	Miscellaneous	Miscellaneous

Sample B

Ralph Pomeroy's poem "Corner" is marked by contemporary, colloquial diction./[1] The major impression is of a suspenseful, stalemate atmosphere./[2] The poem's flowing free verse beautifully preserves the essence of informality and "everydayness" created in description and vocabulary,/[3] and yet holds true the undercurrent of questioning and suspense./[4]

Aware of the friction existing between the cop, "smug in his power," and the "loitering" youth, Pomeroy employs effective imagery to emphasize his theme./[5] Similes and metaphors run together to create description that are lazy, motionless, yet radiating a potential explosiveness of conflict./[6] Descriptions such as the cop leaning "on one leg like a leather stork," and the youth with levis baking and T shirt sweating are very effective./[7] Yet the images are paramountly contemporary as is the whole poem./[8]

The tension is created, at least in part, through the use of short sentences./[9] Towards the middle of the poem the mood changes,/[10] The narrator is not quite so conscious of 'the cop,'/[11] and begins thinking of himself and how long he must wait./[12] The poet suggests that the role of the passive sufferer is difficult,/[13] yet, by convention, there is no alternative./[14] He says "Everything holds me back,"/[15] but he is held there by pride./[16]

The poem would have obvious and far-reaching appeal to the modern youth, as Pomeroy reflects one aspect of their harassed life./[17] He strives to indicate the oppression experienced by the youth as the suffocating society, symbolized by the "cop," like the solar heat, bears them down./[18] Thus, the theme portrayed is one of contemporary value to the contemporary population,/[19] and is excellently outlined by the directness and brevity of the style./[20]

Coding:

Response Statement	Subcategory	Category
1	210: Perception of Language	Perception
2	260: Perception of Tone	Perception
3	420: Evaluation of Method	Evaluation
4	420: Evaluation of Method	Evaluation
5	420: Evaluation of Method	Evaluation
6	240: Perception of Technique/Content	Perception
7	420: Evaluation of Method	Evaluation
8	220: Perception of Literary Devices	Perception
9	240: Perception of Technique/Content	Perception

Response Statement	Subcategory	Category
10	250: Perception of Structure	Perception
11	320: Interpretation of Content	Interpretation
12	320: Interpretation of Content	Interpretation
13	340: Typological Interpretation	Interpretation
14	340: Typological Interpretation	Interpretation
15	230: Perception of Content	Perception
16	320: Interpretation of Content	Interpretation
17	500: Miscellaneous	Miscellaneous
18	340: Typological Interpretation	Interpretation
19	350: Hortatory Interpretation	Interpretation
20	420: Evaluation of Method	Evaluation

In order to determine the reliability of the coding, the researcher trained an independent analyst to code a predetermined percentage of the response papers. The check coder was, at the time of the research, an English Subject Mistress in one of the local high schools. Her qualifications included a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from the University of Queensland, and a Master of Letters (specialising in stylistics) from James Cook University of North Queensland. She had taught high school English for twelve years, and conducted tutorials in methods of teaching English for one year at James Cook University.

The method for determining reliability suggested by Squire (1964) was adopted. First, the independent analyst was trained in the Purves system, with the response papers of students ineligible for inclusion in the study used as the basis for discussion. Then, thirty-six protocols (or 15% of the 240 eligible papers) were drawn randomly for the check-coder to classify independently. The first fifteen of these papers were coded, and the results compared, to determine reliability to that point. After certain problems (dealt with below) had been clarified, the remaining twenty-one papers were coded without further discussion. The final degree of agreement was based on the total thirty-six papers. The following formula described by Fox (1969), which reflects the straightforward percentage of agreement between coder and check-coder, was used to determine the reliability of coding:

$$\%\ \text{agreement} = 100 \times \frac{\text{no. of units coded identically}}{\text{total no. of units coded}}$$

The degree of agreement attained by the researcher and the independent analyst is presented in Table 4. The overall reliability coefficients of 81.5% for the five categories and 75.4% for the twent four subcategories compared favorably with those presented in prior studies, e.g. Pollock (1972) who reported 79.7% for categories and 66.4% for subcategories. The degree of agreement for two categories (Engagement-Involvement and Miscellaneous) was inadequate after

TABLE 4

DEGREE OF AGREEMENT IN THE CODING OF 36
RESPONSE PAPERS BY TWO ANALYSTS

Categories/ Subcategories	Agreement Coefficients for Categories	Agreement Coefficients for Subcategories
Engagement (100-130)	79.6	73.4
Perception (200-280)	83.2	78.0
Interpretation (300-350)	78.4	68.3
Evaluation (400-430)	91.6	82.7
Miscellaneous (500)	74.5	74.5
TOTAL	81.5	75.4

comparison of the first fifteen response papers. After conferral, the coefficient for the categories of Engagement was raised from 66.7% to 79.6%, while the coefficient for subcategories of Engagement was improved from 55.3% to 73.4%. The problem with respect to Miscellaneous responses was a related phenomenon, and further discussions eventually raised the degree of agreement from 65.2% to 74.5%. The three most common subcategories in the response papers realized the following coefficients of agreement: 130: Reaction to Content -- 63.5% (85.8% after conferral); 230: Content -- 77.5%; and 320: Interpretation of Content -- 74.6%.

A number of general and specific problems arose during the coding of responses. Rippere proposes an ideal of objectivity which is difficult to attain, let alone maintain, over the reading of thousands of unique response statements:

> First, the purpose of reading by elements is to describe and classify the statements in the essay, not to evaluate or be informed by them. Second, the basis on which the statements are classified is that of the processes which are being performed in them and the subject matter of which they treat, not their style or the assertions they make. (67)

The reader's own subjectivity, informed as it is by his private recreation of the literature, and compounded with a history of evaluative decisions applied to a range of discourse, makes the process of subordinating "assertion" to "subject matter" an even more elusive ideal. On the twenty to twenty five per cent of occasions, therefore, when coders disagree the problems are inevitably within the individual coder.

The report also offers the warning that each statement must be treated "independent of the context in which it occurs," (68) in order for the reader to avoid second-guessing the writer. While in general it is possible to stay within the bounds of this caveat, the vagueness of much adolescent writing demands the occasional consideration of the context. For instance, the isolated statement "This was a strange poem" almost defies classification. If, however, the following statement happens to be: "You would have thought that the author could find something more worthwhile to write about" the likely classification would be 430: Evaluation of Vision. Or a subsequent statement such as "The atmosphere was one of extreme tension" would result in a classification of 260: Tone. Among other possibilities, depending on the evidence of various succeeding statements, the statement could be coded as 410: Affective Evaluation or 130: Reaction to Content.

As indicated below (pp.73-74), it was judged necessary to apply the Purves categories and subcategories as originally constituted, so that a firm basis for comparisons with other cross-sectional studies could be maintained. This necessity created most of the problems encountered in separating Engagement-Involvement from Miscellaneous statements. Purves and Beach (1972), in a later suggestion, underlined the difficulties encountered in distinguishing 120: Reaction to Form statements from 130: Reaction to Content statements: "The division of form and content . . . applies to description, but perhaps less so to the personal statement." (14-15) On the first level a typical sequence is of the order: "I think most young children grow up with a fear of the medical profession./ They have the idea that the hospital comes before the complaint/ and that people go into hospital to die instead of being cured."/ This cogent set of apparent digressions were coded as 500: Miscellaneous, yet they are clearly personal generalizations which deserve inclusion under the aegis of Engagement. On the second level, as evidenced by the preponderance of Engagement statements coded as 130, this researcher could see little distinction between what Purves calls "impressionistic criticism" (Subcategory 120) and its adolescent expression by way of moral reactions, conjecture, or identification. The simpler distinction between autobiographical digressions, and any and all associational statements arising directly from the reader's private experience of the work appears totally adequate.

A closely related set of responses could not be made to fit conclusively into any of the Purves categories. Typical of these statements are the following: "I think the poem is really for adults because children don't know what half the words mean"; "This story might appeal more to younger students"; "This is more of a poem for the hoods in the class than for me." Such statements are conjectural (130) -- not about the content of the literature but about a potential readership. They are paralleled by a common penchant for insisting that the only basis for the author's ability to write about the slice of life represented in the literature is his having lived through a similar experience: "Possibly the author has done it so well because he has been in the situation himself/ and experienced all the fears and misunderstanding involved." The elements of conjecture or evaluation represented in both types of statements relate not to the reader but to a set of generalized others or the author. Again, the indecision as to whether these statements should be coded as Engagement or Evaluation seemed resolvable only by coding them as 500: Miscellaneous.

Additional problems concern degrees of specificity, either within the student writing itself, or in the exemplars and directions provided by Purves and Rippere. For example, in Element 226: Larger Literary Devices, Purves refers to the use of "dialogue, description, melodrama, and those other devices that are not definitive of a genre but which describe parts of a work." (18) As an example he quotes: "Dialogue alternates regularly with narration." The adolescent, however, is rarely as obliging; his prose is characteristically far less clipped and not often directly assimilable to the prototype, as the following statement indicates: "The writing of the story is done so that what the characters say is mixed up with other parts about what happens in the story." Such immature recognitions of technique, while lacking the technical counters such as "dialogue" and "narration," were still classified as perceptional statements. Again, in the absence of contextual clues it is difficult to locate precisely such statements as: "I didn't understand the poem" (200: Perception General or 300: Interpretation General); or "This story did not appeal to me" (100: Engagement General or 400: Evaluation General).

While the actual coding in this study was confined to the levels of categories and subcategories, fewer than half (62) of the 139 elements were represented in the protocols. (It is, of course, essential to consult the elements so that each statement can be located within its appropriate subcategory.) This rather restricted use of the range of elements inevitably precludes discussion of potential problems which might have resulted over approximately 55% of Purves' total schema.

The present study, on this basis, demonstrates the inclusiveness of the Purves system, if one acknowledges the constraints inherent in the literature and in the population sampled. This research utility is a rather different question from the potential value of a quite sophisticated system of content analysis to the classroom teacher. On the one hand, the nine or ten category versions proposed by Purves and Beach (1972) and Michalak (1976) appear to be too general, and obscure interesting and important distinctions among the specialized statements of Perception and Interpretation. What is needed, if the Purves system is to gain widespread use and influence in classrooms, is a compromise schema which occupies a realistic middle ground between the unwieldly specificity of the original Elements and the global simplicity of a nine- or ten-category system.

Teacher Questionnaire

The final element in the study was a direct outcome of the results of quantitative analysis of the student protocols. The coding results suggested the value of pursuing such issues as: the logistics of literature instruction at each of the three grade levels; the general teaching strategies employed by individual teachers as they related to short stories and poems; the presence or absence of adjustments that teachers might make in dealing with the selected short story and poem at each of the three grade levels; the criteria used to evaluate students' written responses; the kinds of comments made on student papers; and a set of personal characterizations of the perceptive student reader. To these ends the eight teachers in the study were asked the following specific questions:

1. What proportion of the time each week do you spend in literary study? For Grade 8? Grade 10? Grade 12?
2. How many stories/poems would you have presented in the last year? To Grade 8? Grade 10? Grade 12?
3. What do you consider to be the most important objectives in teaching the short story? Are there overall objectives which would accommodate all grade levels, and more specific objectives relevant to each of Grades 8, 10 and 12?
4. What do you consider to be the most important objectives in teaching poetry? Again, are there overall objectives which would accommodate all grade levels, and more specific objectives relevant to each of Grades 8, 10 and 12?
5. How do you determine the mark given to students' written responses to literature?
6. What kinds of comments do you make on students' written responses which are submitted to you?
7. How would you approach teaching "The Use of Force" and "Corner" at Grades 8, 10, and 12?
8. What are your most perceptive readers of literature like?

The answers to these questions were examined and synthesized, with interpretive or explanatory comments provided by the researcher where these were considered appropriate.

Summary

This chapter has presented an overview of the research design, the data collection procedures, and the means by which these data were analyzed. The major data base in the study were the free response protocols written by equal groups of grade-eight, grade ten, and grade-twelve students about a short story and a poem. Hypotheses were developed which could be tested for changes in the response patterns of the coded protocols for the study's major variables: the frequency of categories and subcategories of response by grade level, genre, sex, and ability level. Supplementary data were also obtained from a Response Preference Questionnaire which sought information on students' preferred (or expected) modes of response when short stories and poems were encountered in a school setting, and literature in general was encountered in an out-of-school setting. Additionally, procedures to be employed in the qualitative analysis of selected protocols were explained, and an outline of a follow-up questionnaire distributed to teachers was given.

Procedural clarification of the following issues was also provided: the selection of the short story and the poem; the selection of the sample; and an elaboration of the coding procedures used in the study, incorporating a detailed discussion of problems encountered with the coding system developed by Purves and Rippere (1968).

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS: QUANTITATIVE AND COMPARATIVE ISSUES

This study involved a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the free written responses to a short story (William Carlos Williams' "The Use of Force") and a poem (Ralph Pomeroy's "Corner") provided by equal groups of superior and average and male and female students, at grades eight, ten, and twelve drawn from four secondary schools in Townsville, Queensland, Australia. The free response essays of the 120 students were coded according to the system of categories and subcategories of response developed in Purves and Rippere's (1968) Elements of Writing about a Literary Work. In addition, the subjects completed a Response Preference Questionnaire, which translated each of Purves and Rippere's subcategories into questions which students ranked according to their perceived importance when short stories or poems were encountered in a school setting, and literature in general was encountered in an informal setting.

The study sought answers to the following specific questions:

1. What are the patterns of response made by all students to the story and poem combined, or to the story and poem taken separately?
2. Are there differences across grade levels in the patterns of response made by all students to the story and poem combined?
3. Are there differences across grade levels in the patterns of response made by all groups of students to the story and poem taken separately?

4. Are there differences in the patterns of response made by all groups of students to the story as compared with the poem?

5. What are the preferred (or expected) patterns of response when students at all grade levels encounter short stories and poems in a school setting, and literature in general in out-of-school setting?

6. Are there differences in the response patterns of the groups of male and female students to the story and poem combined, or to the story and poem taken separately -- across grade levels or overall?

7. Are there differences in the response patterns of the groups of superior and average students to the story and poem combined, or to the story and poem taken separately -- across grade levels or overall?

8. Are there any discernible combinations of response patterns which are cross-culturally informative in the writings of a sample of Australian students?

9. What qualitative differences are evident in the expressions of engagement, perception, interpretation, and evaluation provided by average and superior students at each of the three grade levels?

10. Does the provision of an audience including the peer group as well as the teacher produce notable features in the content or language mode of students' written responses to literature?

The major findings of the study are reported under headings and sub-headings related to each of these specific questions. This chapter concerns itself with the quantitative and comparative issues raised in questions one to eight; Chapter Five concerns itself with the qualitative analysis proposed in question nine, together with the context issue embraced by question ten, and also presents the results of a follow-up questionnaire distributed to teachers.

Frequency of Responses

Frequency counts were performed on the responses of the total subjects (grades eight, ten, and twelve) to the story, the poem, and the story and poem combined to establish which categories and subcategories were used to an extent significant enough for statistical analysis. The question at issue was that an unselective approach to analysis of variance would mean that in some cases the results of the study would be based on figures drawn from too few responses to be meaningful. An a priori criterion of usage by at least 20% of the subjects was adjusted downwards, after inspection of the data, to 15%. The net effect of this procedure was to allow analysis of two additional subcategories for the story (110 and 240), three additional subcategories for the poem (220, 300 and 410), and five additional subcategories for the story and poem combined (110, 200, 240, 300 and 350). Some further caution may be needed in interpreting the results of analysis for each of these subcategories.

Table 5 reveals the details of the percentage of the total subjects responding with at least one statement in each category and subcategory for the two pieces of literature taken separately, and for the literature combined. For "The Use of Force" all five categories and fifteen subcategories were reflected in the responses of at least 15% of the subjects. For the poem, "Corner", all five categories and seventeen subcategories were used by at least 15% of the subjects, the same spread of responses as was found for the story and poem combined.

Combined Responses to the Story and the Poem

Analysis of the response statements in each protocol yielded an individual profile of each student's response to the story and the poem. These individual profiles indicate for the story and the poem the percentage of total responses devoted to each category and

TABLE 5

PERCENTAGES OF TOTAL SUBJECTS RESPONDING WITH AT LEAST ONE STATEMENT IN EACH CATEGORY AND SUBCATEGORY FOR THE STORY, THE POEM, AND THE STORY AND POEM COMBINED

Category or Subcategory	"The Use of Force" (N=120)	"Corner" (N=120)	Story + Poem (N=240)
I (Engagement)	82.50	75.00	78.75
II (Perception)	89.16	90.83	90.00
III (Interpretation)	84.16	86.66	85.42
IV (Evaluation)	79.16	70.00	74.58
V (Miscellaneous)	45.00	42.50	43.75
Subcategory 100	(10.00)	(11.66)	(10.83)
Subcategory 110	15.83	20.00	17.92
Subcategory 120	30.83	22.50	26.67
Subcategory 130	69.16	60.83	65.00
Subcategory 200	(11.66)	25.00	18.33
Subcategory 210	26.66	21.66	24.17
Subcategory 220	(2.50)	17.50	(10.00)
Subcategory 230	79.16	71.66	75.42
Subcategory 240	18.33	19.66	18.75
Subcategory 250	(13.33)	(14.16)	(13.75)
Subcategory 260	20.00	30.83	25.42
Subcategory 270	(4.17)	(10.83)	(7.5)
Subcategory 280	(1.70)	(0.83)	(1.25)
Subcategory 300	(12.50)	18.33	15.42
Subcategory 310	(0.83)	(5.00)	(2.92)
Subcategory 320	79.17	75.83	77.50
Subcategory 330	39.16	38.33	38.55
Subcategory 340	26.66	28.33	27.50
Subcategory 350	25.83	(10.83)	18.33
Subcategory 400	48.33	41.66	45.00
Subcategory 410	30.83	17.50	24.17
Subcategory 420	52.50	46.61	49.58
Subcategory 430	31.66	40.83	36.25
Subcategory 500	45.00	42.50	43.75

( ) Denotes subcategories ineligible for analysis of variance.

subcategory. From these 120 individual profiles for each genre, a comprehensive profile of the response percentages for all of the subjects to the story, the poem, and to the story and the poem combined was defined by determining the mean of these individual response percentages for each category and subcategory. The means of the response percentages for the story and poem combined will be discussed first.

Before moving to this discussion, it is appropriate to note the meaning of the standard deviation in studies of this nature as discussed by Purves (1968). Since the minimum percentage of occurrence of any category or subcategory is zero, and the maximum often reaches a fairly high figure, the standard deviation (especially for the more specific subcategories) will almost invariably be larger than the mean. "Its main use is in indicating how far above the mean the occasional, but not the abnormal, paper is going." (49)

It is also worth noting that the usual procedure of transforming percentages to standard scores for the purposes of testing was not adopted so that comparisons could be maintained with the data presented in prior studies. At all points in the following discussion it will be clear that the use of mean percentages, derived from protocols of varying individual lengths, reflect no more than average tendencies for groups distinguished by grade, sex, or ability level.

The mean total statements for all 120 subjects in grades eight, ten, and twelve to the story and poem combined is 16.71; that is, for their response papers combined, the subjects wrote an average of 16.71 statements. The most favored category used in response to both pieces of literature is Perception. As Table 6 shows, almost one third

TABLE 6

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF RESPONSE PERCENTAGES OF THE TOTAL SUBJECTS TO "THE USE OF FORCE" AND "CORNER" COMBINED (N=120)

Category/Subcategory	Mean	S.D.
I (Engagement)	18.32	17.09
II (Perception)	32.71	23.10
III (Interpretation)	26.04	21.87
IV (Evaluation)	17.47	17.54
V (Miscellaneous)	5.13	8.32
Subcategory 100	0.96	3.34
Subcategory 110	2.06	5.83
Subcategory 120	2.80	5.73
Subcategory 130	12.51	14.31
Subcategory 200	2.12	5.99
Subcategory 210	2.46	5.74
Subcategory 220	0.87	3.18
Subcategory 230	21.22	21.92
Subcategory 240	1.75	4.91
Subcategory 250	1.01	3.42
Subcategory 260	2.60	5.25
Subcategory 270	0.54	2.15
Subcategory 280	0.05	0.48
Subcategory 300	1.36	4.18
Subcategory 310	0.16	1.04
Subcategory 320	14.81	13.16
Subcategory 330	4.90	8.62
Subcategory 340	3.14	6.74
Subcategory 350	1.69	4.09
Subcategory 400	5.19	7.78
Subcategory 410	1.92	3.87
Subcategory 420	7.74	11.04
Subcategory 430	2.73	4.99
Subcategory 500	5.13	8.32

(32.17%) of the total responses fall into this category. The next most frequently used category of response is Interpretation with 26.04%, followed by Engagement (18.32%), Evaluation (17.47%), and Miscellaneous (5.13%).

Table 6 also reveals that the most frequently used subcategory (230: Content) accounts for 21.22% of the total responses, a frequency which exceeds that of two of the major categories -- Engagement and Evaluation. The only other subcategories which account for more than ten percent of the total responses are Subcategory 320: Interpretation of Content (14.81%) and Subcategory 130: Reaction to Content (12.51%). This combination of commonly used subcategories (cumulatively accounting for 48.54% of all responses) provides substantial confirmation of previous research findings which suggest that adolescents respond heavily to the content of literature selections.

What emerges, as well, is an early indication of students' preoccupation with the strong narrative elements in the chosen poem. As one eighth grader put it: "This poem doesn't seem like a poem. It is more like a story." The more sophisticated account offered by a twelfth grader asserts: "It is a modern poem as the poet does not adhere to any type of traditional rhythm or rhyme. Thus it is just a piece of refined prose -- with its sentences shortened and condensed into lines."

Table 6 is equally instructive in isolating areas in which students do not respond. Apparently they respond hardly at all to the literary devices (Subcategory 220) used in either the story or the poem, to literary classification (Subcategory 270), or to contextual classification (Subcategory 280). In addition, the students as a whole seem little inclined to make statements of general engagement (Subcategory

100), or to draw stylistic inferences (Subcategory 310) from the two pieces of literature presented. However, as the subjective analysis of individual protocols will indicate, the rather sparse statements in each of these areas are instructive in separating the "superior" from the "average" response paper, as well as in highlighting the limited attempts on the part of selected students at all grade levels to respond to poetic form.

The first question to be tested in this study has been framed in the following terms: Are there significant differences across grade levels in the patterns of response made by all students to the combined pieces of literature? Table 7 introduces a pattern both of stability and of significant differences throughout the grades which will be

TABLE 7

CATEGORY RESPONSES OF STUDENTS IN GRADES 8, 10, AND 12 TO THE STORY AND POEM COMBINED: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s					Scheffé Comparisons by Grade		
Category	Gr.8 (N=40)	Gr.10 (N=40)	Gr.12 (N=40)	F Ratio (df=2;117)	Prob.	(8-10)	(8-12)	(10-12)
Engagement	25.55	18.36	10.92	16.86	***	*	***	*
Perception	34.06	30.38	33.69	0.61	NS			
Interpretation	12.58	31.73	33.82	28.13	***	***	***	NS
Evaluation	21.43	14.64	16.35	3.31	*	*	NS	NS
Miscellaneous	5.41	4.90	5.09	0.08	NS			

* p <.05
** p <.01
*** p <.001

echoed in many of the separate discussions which follow. In their combined responses to both the short story and the poem there is a remarkable consistency in the priority that students in grades eight, ten, and twelve accord to Perception. The rank order of categories reveals that at grades ten and twelve the students do respond with more Interpretation than Perception, but the difference in percentage points between the two categories is minimal -- 1.35% at grade ten, and 0.13% at grade twelve. Thus, while Perception is clearly paramount at grade eight, the older students appear to have established a pattern which equates Perception with Interpretation in terms that make these most favored categories virtually interchangeable.

Of equal importance to these indices of stability is the highly significant decrease across the grades in the category of Engagement. By grade twelve the students have more than halved the frequency of their expressions of personal involvement in their responses to the story and poem combined. This movement, however, has the characteristics of a step-wise reduction, falling from a high of 25.66% in grade eight by 7.3% between grade eight and grade ten, and by a comparable 7.43% between grades ten and twelve. By contrast, as indicated above, the highly significant increase in Interpretation throughout the grades is confined to differences between grades eight and ten, and grades eight and twelve. The category of Evaluation, finally, presents an inconsistent pattern throughout the grades. There is a significant decrease in the frequency of responses of judgment between grades eight and ten, with an associated, though insubstantial, increase in the frequency of statements of Evaluation between grades ten and twelve. Overall, then, the older students in grades ten and twelve reveal greater similarities with one another, than do either group with grade eights. By age fifteen or sixteen many students apparently (1) experience an uneasiness about expressing their emotional responses though such responses may indeed be strongly felt; (2) are confident, if not competent, in searching for meanings in the literature they read; and (3) are less prone than their younger counterparts to evaluate what they read.

These general, and somewhat tentative, observations can acquire a sharper focus through an analysis of the significant differences which occur with respect to the subcategories of response as revealed in Table 8. Again, only those subcategories used by at least 15% of the students in response to the story and poem combined will be considered. (Mean response percentages for the subcategories which did not qualify for this analysis, and for the separate analyses for the story and poem, are given in Appendix B, Tables A, B, and C.)

Overall significant differences were found in three subcategories for each of Engagement and Perception, for four subcategories of Interpretation, and for only one subcategory of Evaluation. Subcategories 110 and 120 (Reaction to Literature and Reaction to Form) reveal a homogeneity between pairs of grade levels which contrasts sharply with the pattern for Subcategory 130 (Reaction to Content). Students in grades ten and twelve, unlike those in grade eight, make comparatively few statements which reveal their concern for the propriety or morality of the work or its author, and avoid impressionistic remarks or the temptation to recast the work in terms of their private experiences of it. On the other hand, students in grades eight and ten are almost equally and heavily disposed to conjectural comments, to those that

TABLE 8

SUBCATEGORY RESPONSES OF STUDENTS IN GRADES 8, 10, AND 12 TO THE STORY AND POEM COMBINED: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s					Scheffé Comparisons by Grade		
Subcategory	Gr.8 (N=40)	Gr.10 (N=40)	Gr.12 (N=40)	F Ratio (df=2;117)	Prob.	(8-10)	(8-12)	(10-12)
110	3.45	1.48	1.27	3.48	*	NS	NS	NS
120	5.47	1.28	1.56	15.72	***	***	***	NS
130	14.83	14.76	7.94	8.40	**	NS	**	**
200	4.28	1.78	0.31	9.64	***	*	***	NS
210	2.10	2.11	3.16	0.59	NS			
230	24.10	21.52	18.02	1.56	NS			
240	0.69	1.25	3.30	6.61	**	NS	**	*
260	1.61	2.19	4.01	4.01	*	NS	*	NS
300	1.32	1.26	1.49	0.06	NS			
320	8.77	19.61	16.07	15.88	***	***	**	NS
330	1.52	5.44	7.74	11.60	***	**	***	NS
340	0.42	3.03	5.97	15.21	***	*	***	*
350	0.47	2.24	2.36	5.56	**	*	**	NS
400	7.60	4.74	3.23	6.82	**	NS	**	NS
410	2.77	1.57	1.43	2.95	NS			
420	9.22	5.67	8.32	2.27	NS			
430	2.14	2.62	3.44	0.25	NS			
500	5.41	4.90	5.09	0.77	NS			

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

identify the writer with the work, and to autobiographical digressions. It is worth noting, as well, that almost 80% of the Engagement responses of grade-twelve students fall into Subcategory 130.

The consistency of overall decreases in responses of Engagement throughout the grades is replaced by a pattern of inconsistencies of movement in the subcategories of Perception, Interpretation, and

Evaluation. Subcategory 200 responses (Perception General) exhibit a highly significant (.001 level) decrease between grades eight and twelve, a decrease significant at the .05 level of probability between grades eight and ten, and a notable (though not significant) decrease between grades ten and twelve. Most of the statements within this subcategory refer to difficulties of reading comprehension (e.g. "I didn't understand the last paragraph of the poem," or "One word that I found hard to think about and I got snagged on it was 'imperceptible'.") Therefore, the pattern unearthed in this analysis is highly predictable and easily explained in terms of the relative lack of problems which the older groups of students have at this level of understanding. For Subcategory 230 (Statements of Content) -- the most popular subcategory of response overall -- a steady, though not significant decrease throughout the grades was apparent. In this case, the quality and purpose of an obvious predilection for retelling or paraphrase on the part of most students is an important matter for later considerion.

For Subcategory 260 (Tone) the mean response percentage for students in grade twelve is significantly higher than that for students in grade eight. This gradual increase in the percentage of statements about mood, pace, point of view, and so on throughout the grades is paralleled by significant increases in references to the structure of the work (Subcategory 240), and an increase, though rather less marked, of attention paid to elements of the language of the work (Subcategory 210).

Differences among the grade level responses are significant in ten of a possible fifteen between group comparisons for subcategories of Interpretation. Mimetic, Typological, and Hortatory Interpretation

(Subcategories 330, 340 and 350) exhibit a steady increase in percentages throughout the grades, with the differences proving significant at least at the .05 level of probability between virtually all pairs of grade levels. (The only exceptions were restricted to comparisons between grades ten and twelve for Mimetic Interpretation and Hortatory Interpretation.) Thus, at the same time as the grade-twelve students were responding more frequently with complex statements of mimesis, theorizing at higher levels of abstraction, and eliciting the didactic elements of the works, the grade-ten students were confining themselves rather more to character analysis, and inferential responses about the author, or the temporality of the works. These preoccupations are reflected in the levels of significance for Subcategory 320 (Interpretation of Content) where the increase in percentages between grades eight and ten (8.77% to 19.61%) proved significant at the .001 level of probability, but only at the .01 level of probability between grades eight and twelve.

Although all four subcategories of Evaluation were used with sufficient frequency to qualify for analysis of variance, only Subcategory 400: Evaluation General provided an overall significant difference. As Table 8 indicates, the twelfth-graders responded with the vague evaluative statements characteristic of this subcategory with less than half the frequency of eighth-graders -- 7.60% and 3.23% respectively. It is just as important to note, at this stage, that the descriptive, non-judgmental application of the Purves schema reveals that eighth-graders appear to make slightly more of the specific evaluative responses of the author's method or technique (Subcategory 420) than do twelfth-graders. Yet the focus on group means does little to distinguish statements of the order, "This story is put together well," from adequately documented accounts of specific intricacies of an author's craft.

One other difference regarding fluency among the grades should be mentioned. For total statements written in response to the story and poem combined, an F ratio of 27.43 and an overall difference significant at the .001 level of probability were recorded. Students in grade twelve wrote significantly more statements (20.63 mean statements) than students in grade ten (16.73) or grade eight (12.79).

Responses to "The Use of Force"

In their written responses to the selected short story, "The Use of Force" by William Carlos Williams, the subjects as a whole averaged 17.61 statements. As indicated in Table 9 the preferred mode of response was Perception which accounted for 31.81% of the responses. The next most favored mode was Interpretation with 24.83%. Interestingly, the categories of Engagement and Evaluation displayed almost identical mean -- 18.91% and 18.98% respectively.

The pattern of distribution for subcategories of response is entirely in line with that already unearthed for the story and poem combined. Only three subcategories individually accounted for ten per cent of the total responses to "The Use of Force." These were 230: Content (23.91%), 320: Interpretation of Content (13.85%), and 130: Reaction to Content (13.13%). All of the remaining subcategories, with the exception of 500: Miscellaneous (5.28%), fail to account for five per cent of responses to the story.

TABLE 9

MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF RESPONSE PERCENTAGES OF THE TOTAL SUBJECTS TO "THE USE OF FORCE" (N=120)

Category or Subcategory	Mean	S.D.
I (Engagement)	18.91	16.83
II (Perception)	31.81	22.82
III (Interpretation)	24.83	21.11
IV (Evaluation)	18.98	18.01
V (Miscellaneous)	5.28	8.24
Subcategory 100	0.66	2.33
Subcategory 110	1.64	4.30
Subcategory 120	3.50	6.47
Subcategory 130	13.13	14.18
Subcategory 200	1.23	4.18
Subcategory 210	2.38	5.32
Subcategory 220	0.15	1.00
Subcategory 230	23.91	22.80
Subcategory 240	1.29	3.01
Subcategory 250	1.11	4.11
Subcategory 260	1.57	3.80
Subcategory 270	0.26	1.31
Subcategory 280	0.08	0.64
Subcategory 300	1.09	4.34
Subcategory 310	0.02	0.20
Subcategory 320	13.85	11.83
Subcategory 330	4.61	7.85
Subcategory 340	2.89	6.03
Subcategory 350	2.43	4.77
Subcategory 400	0.05	0.07
Subcategory 410	2.35	4.11
Subcategory 420	8.56	11.84
Subcategory 430	2.63	4.41
Subcategory 500	5.28	8.38

An analysis of the grade-level distributions (Table 10) reveals significant differences within the categories of Engagement and Interpretation, Again, the eighth-grade students responded far more frequently in the category of Engagement than did the older students. The expected reversal of this pattern for Interpretation is also in evidence, with twelfth-graders (35.44%) and tenth-graders (28.70%) writing a far greater percentage of statements in this category than eighth-graders (10.55%).

TABLE 10

CATEGORY RESPONSES OF STUDENTS IN GRADES 8, 10, AND 12
TO "THE USE OF FORCE": MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES
AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s					Scheffé Comparisons by Grade		
Category	Gr.8 (N=40)	Gr.10 (N=40)	Gr.12 (N=40)	F Ratio (df=2;117)	Prob.	(8-10)	(8-12)	(10-12)
Engagement	26.72	17.71	12.30	8.42	***	NS	***	*
Perception	33.10	32.96	29.37	0.34	NS			
Interpretation	10.55	28.70	35.24	19.17	***	***	**	NS
Evaluation	23.62	15.43	17.88	2.22	NS			
Miscellaneous	5.11	5.23	5.50	0.02	NS			

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

Examination of the rank order of the major categories within each grade level reinforces a pattern of similarities between grades ten and twelve which can be contrasted with that disclosed for grade eight. At grade twelve Interpretation is followed by Perception, Evaluation, and Engagement, while at grade ten Perception is followed by Interpretation, Engagement, and Evaluation in that order. The twin reversals of Perception and Interpretation, and Engagement and Evaluation in these rankings are of less importance than the higher priority placed on Engagement and Evaluation at grade eight, associated as it is with the low percentage of Interpretation responses. Put another way, not only is the figure for Interpretation at grade eight the lowest for all four major categories at all three grade levels, it is also separated from the third ranking Evaluation by 13.07 percentage points at this grade level.

In addition, among the subcategories for "The Use of Force" four of five overall significant differences occur under the umbrella of Interpretation (Table 11). For 320: Interpretation of Content, differences are again significant at the .001 level of probability between grades eight and ten, and grades eight and twelve, with the older students showing much more inclination to search for meanings in the story, and to pursue questions of character motivation. While students in grades ten and twelve make approximately the same frequency of moralistic responses, the grade twelve students, as might be expected, make considerably more typological responses located within the larger universe of experiences which they inhabit.

The only other significant difference within subcategories was found for 120: Reaction to Form. The story itself traffics in

TABLE 11

SUBCATEGORY RESPONSES OF STUDENTS IN GRADE 8, 10, AND 12 TO "THE USE OF FORCE": MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s					Scheffé Comparisons by Grade		
Subcategory	Gr.8 (N=40)	Gr.10 (N=40)	Gr.12 (N=40)	F Ratio (df=2;117)	Prob.	(8-10)	(8-12)	(10-12)
110	2.26	1.36	1.31	0.62	NS			
120	7.52	1.40	1.60	14.09	***	***	***	NS
130	15.97	14.28	9.15	0.08	NS			
210	2.67	2.45	2.02	0.86	NS			
230	23.65	26.69	21.39	0.54	NS			
240	1.18	0.76	1.93	1.58	NS			
260	2.46	0.57	1.68	2.56	NS			
320	6.87	17.64	17.02	12.46	***	***	***	NS
330	1.57	5.22	7.03	5.40	**	NS	**	NS
340	0.32	1.88	6.48	13.68	***	NS	***	**
350	0.74	3.30	3.24	3.95	*	*	NS	NS
400	7.02	5.27	4.20	1.47	NS			
410	3.23	1.72	2.12	1.45	NS			
420	11.43	6.28	7.99	1.99	NS			
430	2.16	2.16	3.57	1.37	NS			
500	5.11	5.23	5.50	0.06	NS			

* p <.05
** p <.01
*** p <.001

strong emotions, with a high level of overt conflict; so that, within the framework of a general and prevailing desire to inform the reader of their emotional reactions, the grade-eights in this sample provided a wide range of strongly worded comments, usually objecting to the starkness of the picture with which Williams confronted them. Such considerations would account, as well, for the statements of general evaluation (Subcategory 400), and the rather more specific accounts of the author's craft (Subcategory 420) which these younger students made in non-significant but substantially greater frequencies than students in grades ten and twelve.

It could be argued that "The Use of Force" produced a higher frequency of Engagment and Evaluative reactions from the grade-eights because of the story's relative closeness to their experiences. However, as the following discussion indicates, the younger students responded with only slightly lower percentages of statements of Engagement and Evaluation for the poem, despite the difference in age of the protagonist and the possibly greater relevance of the conflict situation to older adolescents. As a corollary, and perhaps more surprisingly, the older grade-twelve students responded with slightly more Engagement for "The Use of Force" than for "Corner".

A Comparison With Other Studies (1)

As indicated in Chapter Three, "The Use of Force" was selected for this study so that the pattern of response preferences for a sample of Australian students could be incidentally compared with the results reported in the studies by Purves (1968), and Purves, Foshay, and Hansson (1973).

A more direct comparison is possible with the former study than with the latter, because Purves (1968) did in fact code the actual written responses of 100 American students (43 thirteen-year-olds and 57 seventeen-year-olds) to the story. Therefore, both the mode of response and two grade levels (eight and twelve) for the American and Australian samples are strictly comparable. On the other hand, the IEA study, as indicated in Chapter Two, made use of a Response Preference

Questionnaire with national samples aged fourteen and eighteen. These differences in response measure and age will lead to rather more tentative conclusions regarding cross-cultural similarities when the results for the Australian students are compared with those from the other English-speaking countries of the IEA study.

When the combined responses of students at grade eight and grade twelve in this and the Purves study are examined, Perception is seen to be favored by both national samples. The preference, however, is somewhat more marked for the American students who respond with an average of 39.96% of their total responses in this category, as compared with 31.24% for the Australian sample. The rank order for the remaining categories reveals some interesting contrasts. After Perception, the American students favor Evaluation (24.69%), Engagement (21.26%), and Interpretation (11.55%). The Australian students on the other hand, respond with nearly twice as many statements of Interpretation (22.90%) as their second choice, following this with Evaluation (19.88%) and Engagement (19.51%).

Table 12 reveals some quite specific contrasts (as well as some notable similarities) between the American and Australian students at both the grade-eight and grade-twelve levels. In particular, the older American students represent something of an enigma in their heavy (24.8%) commitment to Engagement responses. By contrast, the drop in Engagement responses from 26.72% at grade eight to 12.30% at grade twelve places the Australian students more firmly in a tradition which disdains expressions of personal reaction in the pre-university year. The force of this unexpected pattern is underlined further when the frequencies for the most popular subcategory of Engagement (130:

TABLE 12

COMPARISON OF MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES TO "THE USE OF FORCE" FOR GRADE EIGHT AND GRADE TWELVE SUBJECTS IN THE PURVES STUDY AND THIS STUDY: CATEGORIES AND SELECTED SUBCATEGORIES

Categories and Subcategories	MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES GRADE 8 PURVES (N=43)	 GRADE 8 THIS STUDY (N=40)	 GRADE 12 PURVES (N=57)	 GRADE 12 THIS STUDY (N=40)
I Engagement	18.13	26.72	24.38	12.30
II Perception	33.24	33.10	46.67	29.37
III Interpretation	10.32	10.55	12.79	35.24
IV Evaluation	35.09	23.62	14.29	17.88
V Miscellaneous	2.22	5.11	2.87	5.50
Subcategory 120	3.90	7.52	5.71	1.60
Subcategory 130	13.18	15.97	16.46	9.15
Subcategory 200	0.23	1.66	1.53	0.29
Subcategory 210	3.68	2.67	2.20	2.02
Subcategory 220	0.53	0.23	1.71	0.21
Subcategory 230	21.49	23.65	32.25	21.29
Subcategory 240	0.87	1.18	0.78	1.93
Subcategory 250	1.55	1.24	1.91	1.30
Subcategory 260	0.38	2.46	1.13	1.68
Subcategory 270	1.60	0.00	1.48	0.65
Subcategory 280	1.00	0.00	1.17	0.08
Subcategory 300	3.63	1.04	2.42	1.48
Subcategory 320	0.95	6.87	3.23	17.02
Subcategory 330	5.01	1.57	5.97	7.03
Subcategory 340	1.16	0.32	1.26	6.48
Subcategory 350	1.73	0.74	2.48	3.24
Subcategory 400	8.30	7.02	3.14	4.20
Subcategory 410	2.53	3.23	2.26	2.12
Subcategory 420	18.95	11.43	3.94	7.99
Subcategory 430	8.05	2.16	3.87	3.57
Subcategory 500	2.22	5.11	2.87	5.50

Reaction to Content) are examined. Here, the figures for the American grade twelves (16.46%) and the Australian grade eights (15.97%) are virtually identical.

A rather more expected pattern of similarity occurs for Interpretation, but only at the grade eight level, where both national samples respond with low and strictly comparable figures -- 10.32% and 10.55%. The increase in Interpretation responses for the Australian grade twelves is ten times that for their American counterparts, representing a gain across the two grade levels of 24.69% and 2.47% respectively. This fact that the older American students did not respond with substantial Interpretation is just as surprising as their predilection for Engagement.

Purves comments in passing on the drop in frequency of Evaluation, and the rise in frequency for Perception for the American grade twelves as being "probably explainable in terms of the high school curriculum." (1968, 51) While similar movements are found for the Australian grade twelves, they are not quite as dramatic. For Evaluation, in particular, the grade-eight American students respond with far greater frequency than Australian grade-eights (35.09% as opposed to 23.62%). The younger American students made most of their additional statements in this area in Subcategories 420 and 430: Evaluation of Method and Evaluation of the Author's Vision. It is clear, as well, that most of the additional Perception responses which the American grade-twelves make are within Subcategory 230: Content. What is not altogether evident is how Purves would relate this increased attention to retelling and paraphrase at the grade-twelve level to the effects of literature instruction, unless within the context of such activities as plot summaries or book reports.

Unfortunately for this comparison, Purves gives no indication of his sampling procedures, and it may be that at least part of the discrepancy in Engagement, Interpretation, and Perception responses can be attributed to the deliberate inclusion in this study of a substantial number of students designated as superior by their teachers. The interview schedule, reported below, sheds at least some indirect light on the criteria by which these students were selected, underlining in the process the rhetorical strategies which the Australian teachers valued most in the writing of their students.

It is worth repeating that in the IEA study, students were asked to choose five questions (out of a possible twenty) which they considered most important to ask about "The Use of Force." The questions provided covered the range of Purves' subcategories, with the exception of the general subcategories and Miscellaneous (i.e. 100, 200, 300, 400 and 500). Of the many results of analysis reported in Chapter Eight of the IEA study, those most relevant to this discussio concern the comparative response preferences of fourteen- and eightee year-olds from the United States, England, and New Zealand.

If one confines attention to the most popular subcategories (defined as those chosen by at least 25% of students at each age level in each country), a remarkable commonality emerges, both between age levels and across and within the national samples. The majority of preferred questions fall within the following configuration of subcategories:

		310	
	230	320	
120	250	340	410
	260	350	

Of immediate interest is the desire evinced by students at both fourteen and eighteen to interpret the story. In fact, between 36% and 46% of the younger students chose questions of typological interpretation, hortatory interpretation, and interpretation of content, sometimes in greater frequencies than the older students. For example, 46% of American fourteen-year-olds chose typological interpretation, while this most sophisticated, generalizing approach was chosen by only 30% of the older American students. This unlikely pattern was reversed by the New Zealand students, with 48% of the eighteen-year-olds and only 27% of the fourteen-year-olds betraying an interest in Subcategory 340. The most popular interpretive question, chosen by nearly 40% of all students in the three countries, was related to Subcategory 350: "Is there a lesson to be learned from 'The Use of Force'?"

As other researchers (e.g. Hansson, 1973, and Nicol, 1972) have shown, there can be a considerable difference between the indication of a desire to respond to literature in particular ways, and the ability to actually verbalize those responses. Looked at in this way, the significant increases in Interpretation responses for the Australian students may or may not represent a developing facility in the actual discussion of such questions as character motivation, hortatory meanings, and the wider typological issues raised in "The Use of Force." Only the subsequent qualitative analysis of student writing will be able to answer this question.

Further anomalies relate to the use of a Response Questionnaire as the sole instrument for tapping response. For example, Purves' question which corresponds to Subcategory 410: Affective Evaluation is: "Does the story succeed in getting me involved in the situation?" The

Australian students appeared to accord less importance to this question, though it was chosen by about 40% of all populations in the other national samples. It is extremely unlikely, however, that in the free written response, statements of the order "The story is compelling, intriguing, deeply moving, etc." would occur more than once. Possibly, as well, the parallel wording for Subcategory 120: "What emotions does the story arouse in me?" prompted the IEA students to select this Engagement question more frequently than Subcategory 130. The results of coding of written responses for the Australian sample and Purves' American sample has revealed that conjecture, identification, and other comments under Subcategory 130 are more frequently occurring than those for Subcategory 120. The way out of this dilemma is to acknowledge, as has already been suggested, the difficulty of separating the more finely focused statements of Engagement and Evaluation which are differentiated in the Purves system.

The invitation to trace the movements in a simple, yet intense, conflict renders Subcategory 230: Content a popular and inevitable choice for all students in the IEA study as well as for those in this investigation. The only other Perception subcategories consistently chosen were 250: Structure and 260:Tone. Again, the wording of the structural question: "How does 'The Use of Force' build up? How is it organized?" reflects an interest in the patterning of the story's conflict. Strangely, however, while Purves lists factors such as tone, effect, mood, pace, point of view, illusion, and orientation as coming under the aegis of Subcategory 260, the related question is: "What is the writer's opinion of, or attitude toward the people in 'The Use of Force'?" This implied concentration on point of view makes it difficult to tell whether the IEA students would respond differently to a question embracing more of the range of concerns listed for the subcategory. What is clear is that the Australian students share a lack of interest in the more specific technical questions of literary devices, relation of technique to content, literary classification, and contextual classification as applied to "The Use of Force," which the English, American, and New Zealand students indicate by not choosing these questions with any degree of consistency.

The Australian students resemble the Americans in the relative infrequency with which they lean to questions raised by 420: Evaluation of Method and 430: Evaluation of Author's Vision. Both the English and New Zealand students, at fourteen and eighteen, add Subcategory 420 to their list of important questions, with the English students exhibiting a more evaluative bent by adding Subcategory 430 at eighteen.

In summary, then, the responses of this study's sample of Australian students to "The Use of Force" are closer in general outline and composition to the American sample in the IEA study than to either the English or New Zealand samples. However, there are marked differences at the levels of Engagement and Interpretation which clearly differentiate older students in this Australian sample from the American students of the same age in Purves' (1968) study. These contradictory patterns point to the need to supplement and verify the results of the checked-preference method of measuring response changes against an examination of actual protocols written by individual students.

Responses to "Corner"

Responses to Ralph Pomeroy's poem "Corner" averaged 15.82 statements. Table 13 reveals the most popular category of response to be Perception with 33.61% of the responses. Other categories in order were: Interpretation (27.26%); Engagement (17.72%); Evaluation (15.97%); and Miscellaneous (4.99%).

In strict accord with the results already discussed, the most popular subcategories were again 230: Content (18.52%), 320: Interpretation of Content (15.78%), and 130: Reaction to Content (11.88%). Disregarding Miscellaneous responses, only two other subcategories accounted separately for over five per cent of the total responses. These were 330: Mimetic Interpretation (5.19%), and 420: Evaluation of Method (6.91%). It is also worth noting, at this stage, that the combined figure for the subcategories dealing with language and literary devices (210 and 220) amounted to only 4.13% of the corpus of statements for the poem.

Analysis of variance applied to the mean percentages of grade level responses reveals an identical pattern of significant differences at the category level as was obtained for the story (Table 14). Grade-eight and grade-ten students again wrote significantly more statements of Engagement than did grade-twelve students. The expected corollary also holds, in that students in grades ten and twelve provide significantly more statements of Interpretation than do the younger students. Similarly, Evaluation is at a peak in grade eight (19.25%), declining to almost identical frequencies at grades ten and twelve (13.85% and 14.82%).

TABLE 13

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF RESPONSE PERCENTAGES OF THE TOTAL SUBJECTS TO "CORNER" (N=120)

Category or Subcategory	Mean	S.D.
I (Engagement)	17.72	17.38
II (Perception)	33.61	23.45
III (Interpretation)	27.26	22.63
IV (Evaluation)	15.97	17.00
V (Miscellaneous)	4.99	8.43
Subcategory 100	1.25	4.10
Subcategory 110	2.49	7.02
Subcategory 120	2.10	4.80
Subcategory 130	11.88	14.47
Subcategory 200	3.02	7.28
Subcategory 210	2.53	6.15
Subcategory 220	1.60	4.27
Subcategory 230	18.52	20.75
Subcategory 240	2.20	6.23
Subcategory 250	0.92	2.56
Subcategory 260	3.64	6.91
Subcategory 270	0.82	2.72
Subcategory 280	0.02	0.24
Subcategory 300	1.63	4.01
Subcategory 310	0.31	1.45
Subcategory 320	15.78	14.35
Subcategory 330	5.19	9.35
Subcategory 340	3.39	7.39
Subcategory 350	0.96	3.12
Subcategory 400	4.88	8.11
Subcategory 410	1.49	3.58
Subcategory 420	6.91	10.16
Subcategory 430	2.83	5.52
Subcategory 500	4.99	8.43

TABLE 14

CATEGORY RESPONSES OF STUDENTS IN GRADES 8, 10, AND 12 TO "CORNER": MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s					Scheffé Comparisons by Grade		
Category	Gr.8 (N=40)	Gr.10 (N=40)	Gr.12 (N=40)	F Ratio (df=2;117)	Prob.	(8-10)	(8-12)	(10-12)
Engagement	24.61	19.01	9.55	8.66	***	NS	***	*
Perception	35.02	27.81	38.00	2.03	NS			
Interpretation	14.61	34.77	32.40	11.10	***	***	**	NS
Evaluation	19.25	13.85	14.82	1.15	NS			
Miscellaneous	5.71	4.57	4.67	0.22	NS			

* p <.05
** p <.01
*** p <.001

The rank order of categories reveals some slight, yet notable, differences within the grade levels. The two most favored categories at grades ten and twelve are reversed over the pattern discovered for the story. In their responses to the poem the grade-twelve students provided a greater frequency of statements of Perception (38%), making this category rank higher than Interpretation (32.40%). By comparison, the grade-ten students responded less frequently with Perception (27.81%) and more frequently with Interpretation (34.77%), reversing in the process their order of preference for the poem as opposed to the story. The grade-eights, on the other hand, by increasing their concentration on Interpretation and decreasing their concern with Evaluation, reduced the distance between these, their least favored categories, to 4.64 percentage points.

Table 15 reflects some of these shifts of emphasis for "Corner" at the subcategory level. Of the three subcategories of Interpretation which reveal an overall significant difference, two are confined to significant differences between grades eight and twelve. Thus, as indicated previously, the oldest students continue to exhibit an ability to generalize at both the mimetic and typological levels which eludes the youngest students. Moreover, the poem appears to have prompted considerably more interpretations of content from both the grade-eight and grade-ten students, and commensurately fewer statements at this level of interpretation from the grade-twelve students. As a result, differences for Subcategory 320, while not significant between grades eight and twelve, remain significant at the .01 level of probability between grades eight and ten.

In addition, "Corner" produced two significant differences for subcategories of Engagement and a significant difference for the general subcategory of Evaluation. Subcategories 120 and 130 (Reaction to Form and Reaction to Content) reveal an overall significant decrease through the grades. It is rather surprising that the between-grade comparisons for Subcategory 130 exhibit a significant difference only between grades ten and twelve. While grade-twelve students wrote a predictably small percentage of autobiographical, conjectural, or identification comments, the grade-ten students surprise by responding with more frequent statements of this order than grade-eights. More understandable is the overall significant decline of general evaluative responses (Subcategory 400) from grade eight to grade twelve. As far as the more specific subcategories of Evaluation are concerned, however, the younger students continue to provide responses in a frequency which

TABLE 15

SUBCATEGORY RESPONSES OF STUDENTS IN GRADES 8, 10, AND 12 TO "CORNER": MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s					Scheffé Comparisons by Grade		
Subcategory	Gr.8 (N=40)	Gr.10 (N=40)	Gr.12 (N=40)	F Ratio (df=2;117)	Prob.	(8-10)	(8-12)	(10-12)
110	4.64	1.60	1.23	2.94	NS			
120	3.61	1.16	1.53	3.14	*	NS	NS	NS
130	13.70	15.24	6.72	4.14	*	NS	NS	*
200	6.90	1.83	0.32	10.36	***	**	***	NS
210	1.52	1.77	4.31	2.58	NS			
220	0.07	1.05	3.67	8.54	***	NS	***	*
230	24.54	16.36	14.66	2.67	NS			
240	0.19	1.74	4.68	5.77	**	NS	**	NS
260	0.76	3.81	6.34	7.22	**	NS	**	NS
300	1.60	1.79	1.49	0.06	NS			
320	10.66	21.58	15.11	6.38	**	**	NS	NS
330	1.47	5.67	8.45	6.14	**	NS	**	NS
340	0.52	4.17	5.47	5.14	**	NS	**	NS
400	8.17	4.20	2.26	5.99	**	NS	**	NS
410	2.32	1.43	0.74	1.99	NS			
420	7.02	5.06	8.65	1.26	NS			
430	2.12	3.08	3.30	0.51	NS			
500	5.71	4.57	4.67	0.43	NS			

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

matches that for the older students. For example, for Subcategory 420: Evaluation of Method, the frequency for grade-twelve students was 8.65% which is very similar to the 7.02% for grade-eight students.

Four of the six subcategories of Perception which qualified for analysis of variance exhibited significant differences across the grades. First, Subcategory 200: Perception General accounted for differences significant at the .001 level of probability between grades eight and twelve, and at the .01 level of probability between grades eight and ten. The grade-eight students, as might be expected, found much of the language or action (or rather inaction) of the poem difficult to comprehend. On the other hand, the grade-twelve students made significantly more statements concerning the structure of the poem (Subcategory 240), and listed the poet's literary devices (Subcategory 220) with far greater frequency than did either group of younger students. The grade twelves, as well, show significantly more interest in matters reflecting the poem's tone, mood, pace, effect, or point of view (Subcategory 260).

Finally, while the remaining two subcategories of Perception (210: Language and 230: Content) do not provide significant differences, their pattern across the grades is of interest. The poem calls forth a respectable percentage of statements concerning diction, syntax, sound patterns and the like from grade-twelve students. The frequency for this subcategory at grade twelve (4.31%) is greater than the combined frequencies for grades eight and ten. Also, the overall increases in perceptional statements for most of the subcategories accounts for the reduction, at grade twelve, in the frequency of comments devoted to recounting or paraphrase.

Differences in the Responses to "The Use of Force" and "Corner"

In the response preferences for the story and poem combined, and for the story and poem taken separately, significant differences between the grades occur consistently, yet largely within the limits of the categories and subcategories of Engagement and Interpretation. When the combined responses to "The Use of Force" are compared directly with those for "Corner" an even more limited array of significant differences emerges. Results of this comparison for the total subjects are provided in Table 16. Comparisons at each grade level appear in Appendix B, Tables, D, E and F.

As much of the previous discussion has foreshadowed, the category responses for the story and the poem are virtually identical. For Engagement the difference in mean percentages is 1.29%; for Perception, 1.80%; for Interpretation, 2.43%; for Evaluation, 2.91%; and for Miscellaneous, 0.29%. While in any strict sense this pattern of mirrored responses is not generalizable to the generic entities, "short stories" and "poetry," it provides substantial evidence of the constraints inherent in the rationale for the selection of "Corner" as the poem for analysis. It still seems reasonable, however, that the choice of a recognizable lyric as opposed to a comparable narrative would have channelled responses into appropriate subcategories of Perception at the expense of Interpretation.

Again, while Table 16 reveals a total of six subcategories showing significant differences between the story and the poem, only two of these subcategories allow cautious inferences to be drawn regarding the responses of the total subjects to different literary forms. "Corner" received significantly higher percentages for Subcategory 200: Perception General, and significantly lower percentages for Subcategory 230: Content. At the same time as the poem presented difficulties in reading comprehension, it prompted far fewer retellings than the story.

TABLE 16

SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES IN RESPONSES TO "THE USE OF FORCE" AND "CORNER" CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES

	Mean Response %'s			
Category/Subcategory	"Use of Force" (N=120)	"Corner" (N=120)	F Ratio (df=1; 238)	Prob.
Engagement	18.91	17.72	0.52	NS
Perception	31.81	33.61	0.51	NS
Interpretation	24.83	27.26	0.27	NS
Evaluation	18.98	15.97	3.28	NS
Miscellaneous	5.28	4.99	0.76	NS
Subcategory 110	1.64	2.49	1.34	NS
Subcategory 120	3.50	2.10	4.23	*
Subcategory 130	13.13	11.88	0.54	NS
Subcategory 200	1.23	3.02	6.29	*
Subcategory 210	2.38	2.53	0.05	NS
Subcategory 230	23.91	18.52	4.93	*
Subcategory 240	1.29	2.20	2.45	NS
Subcategory 260	1.57	3.63	8.36	**
Subcategory 300	1.09	1.63	0.96	NS
Subcategory 320	13.85	15.78	1.96	NS
Subcategory 330	4.61	5.19	0.41	NS
Subcategory 340	2.89	3.39	0.53	NS
Subcategory 350	2.43	0.96	10.06	**
Subcategory 400	5.50	4.88	0.60	NS
Subcategory 410	2.35	1.49	4.34	*
Subcategory 420	8.56	6.91	1.78	NS
Subcategory 430	2.63	2.83	0.12	NS
Subcategory 500	5.28	4.99	0.08	NS

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

That is, the subjects as a whole find predictable problems with the language of poetic narrative, yet forego, at least in some measure, a propensity to retrace the steps in the sequence of events on which the poem builds.

The four remaining significant subcategories reflect an apparently heterogeneous range of differences which could result from the accidental juxtaposing of any two literary stimuli, rather than from the presentation of different literary genres. On one level, "The Use of Force" appears to make a more direct appeal to the emotions of these adolescent readers, so that they respond in kind by providing a significantly greater number of testimonies which chart the intensity of this arousal of emotion (Subcategory 410: Affective Evaluation). Having found the story "repelling," "disturbing," "absorbing," and so on, the older students, in what turns out to be a significant number of instances, appear to pair this response with a pointing up of the moral of the story (Subcategory 350: Hortatory Interpretation) e.g., "The writer, then, reminds us that we are all like that, with the potential for mental and physical cruelty." Alternatively, many of the younger readers show their dissatisfaction with the story by advising the author of changes they would have made in the ordering of its events or with the ending (Subcategory 120: Reaction to Form). Finally, although the conflict in the poem is muted and understated, the subjects made frequent notations of tone, effect, or point of view: "Throughout Pomeroy maintains a suspensive, stalemate atmosphere," or, "The poem, however, does not give the policeman's view of the scene."

With these general exceptions, the absence of significant overall differences between the story and the poem is maintained throughout the grades, at both the category and subcategory levels. It is clearly worth remembering, however, that the 15% restriction on eligible subcategories completely obscures patterns of interest for

Subcategory 220: Perception of Literary Devices. For example, at grade ten there were no discussions of literary devices for the story, but 1.05% of responses to the poem were so classified. At grade twelve the story again elicited very few references to metaphor, simile, irony, and so on (0.21%), yet such references accounted for 3.67% of references to the poem. The clear minority of students whose protocols reflect this concern are obvious candidates in any qualitative discussion.

In the overall measures of fluency already quoted, the story accounted for a mean of 17.61 statements, and the poem 15.82 statements, a difference significant at the .01 level of probability. With regard to specific grade level contrasts the means were as follows: story (14.30) vs poem (11.26), $p < .01$ for grade eight; story (17.90) vs poem (15.55), $p < .05$ for grade ten. At grade twelve, entirely by chance, the number of statements written for story and poem were identical -- 20.63.

Short Stories and Poems in a School Setting

The consistency of responses to "The Use of Force" and "Corner" raises the question of the extent to which students at each of the three grade levels expect to adopt a uniform approach (in the classroom setting) to the study of short stories in general, or poems in general. In order to shed further light on this question the eligible subjects completed a Response Preference Questionnaire (see Appendix C) which asked them to rank the ten most important questions, and the five least important questions, which they would expect to inform or delimit the study of short stories or poems in school. Table 17 summarizes the

TABLE 17

PREFERRED AND REJECTED SUBCATEGORIES FOR SHORT STORIES AND POEMS IN A SCHOOL SETTING: RANK ORDERS AT GRADES EIGHT, TEN, AND TWELVE

	RANK ORDERS OF PREFERRED SUBCATEGORIES					
	SHORT STORIES IN SCHOOL			POEMS IN SCHOOL		
	GR.8	GR.10	GR.12	GR.8	GR.10	GR.12
(1)	230	230	260	100	220	220
(2)	250	250	340	260	210	210
(3)	100	100	250	220	260	300
(4)	260	340	220	120	100	260
(5)	120	410	230	310	120	240
(6)	400	260	210	250	310	310
(7)	420	300	280	230	240	350
(8)	130	320	420	420	250	410
(9)	270	120	240	210	270	420
(10)	410	240	120	410	230	280
	RANK ORDERS OF REJECTED SUBCATEGORIES					
(1)	110	110	110	110	110	110
(2)	280	270	270	280	230	130
(3)	220	430	400	430	130	430
(4)	210	400	430	270	280	230
(5)	430	130	130	330	430	400

results of these patterns of preference and rejection at each of grades eight, ten, and twelve in terms of Purves' subcategories.

First, the patterns for preferred subcategories reveal some important differences both between grades and genres. Students in grades ten and twelve expect to focus rather more on the formal and technical aspects of poetry than do students in grade eight. However, the relevant subcategories (220 and 210: Literary Devices and Language) still appear in the list of important topics for grade eights. On the other hand, students in grades eight and ten accord more importance to questions of content and structure (Subcategories 230 and 250) in their approach to short stories than do students in grade twelve.

With regard to the other subcategories of Perception, the most notable expressions of preference occur with respect to 260: Tone. All students, at each grade level and with respect to the two genres, accord major significance to considerations of tone, mood, atmosphere, pace, and point of view. Similarly, both groups of older students clearly favor a set of questions which will expect them to relate the style or form of both short stories and poems to the content of the literature (Subcategory 240). Only at grade twelve does the question of contextual classification (Subcategory 280), or the placing of story or poem in its historical context, assume any significance, and then rather more with respect to poetry than to short stories.

A more circuitous approach needs to be taken to explain the occurrence of Subcategory 270 in the list of approved questions -- for the short story at grade eight, and for poems at grade ten. In both instances the students are more likely to be responding to the sub-question "Is the story/poem like any other I know?" rather than to the generic issues raised in the main question: "What type of story/poem is it?" Perhaps the thematic organization of courses of literary study at grades eight and ten prompted the selection of this question by large numbers of these younger students.

Students in grade eight again differentiate themselves from those in grades ten and twelve in their emphasis on Engagement questions and their general avoidance of Interpretation questions. While Subcategories 100, 120, and 130 are included in the list of important questions for short stories, these youngest students appear to replace some of their predilection for Engagement with a concern for "hidden meanings" (Subcategory 310) when they approach poems. The expected corollary, especially the desire to interpret a short story at the typological level, is evident in the choice of Subcategory 340 by both grade-ten and grade-twelve students. Only at grade twelve, as well, did the students expect the two literary forms to provide a didactic focus, with such an emphasis likely to occur rather more with poems as stimulus than short stories.

With regard to Evaluation, grade-eight students appear to align themselves more closely with the grade twelves than with the grade tens. On the other hand, the younger students exhibit the most thoroughgoing preference for evaluating short stories (Subcategories 400, 410, and 420), while the grade-twelves indicate a preference for 420: Evaluation of Method in their approach to both short stories and poems, adding 410: Affective Evaluation to their list of poem-related questions. No evaluative questions appear in the grade-ten preferences for poems, and short stories command reference only to Subcategory 410 at this grade level.

Finally, there is a remarkable consistency across all three grade levels in one pattern of questions consciously rejected for both short stories and poems. All students regard as unimportant questions relating to the propriety or importance of the subject or topic of both literary types (Subcategories 110 and 430). A logic of expectations, or an internal logic, is evident in the disposition of other subcategories accorded very little importance. For example, the grade-eight students consciously dispose of questions of contextual classification for both short stories and poems, and betray little interest in the literary devices or language of a short story. Both grades tens and grade twelves recognize the marginal application of Subcategory 230: Content to discussions of most types of poems, and are less prone to search for personal correlatives in the poems they read than are grade eights.

Responses of Subjects According to Sex

Very few significant differences, either overall or by grade level, were obtained when the responses of boys were compared with those for girls. This lends support to the conclusions by Squire (1964), Cooper (1969) and others that such differences are minimal. For the story and poem combined, only three subcategories exhibited significant differences. Girls responded with significantly higher percentages of statements of Affective Evaluation (Subcategory 410), and Evaluation of Method (Subcategory 420). As Table 18 indicates, the differences in these responses of evaluation is significant at the .05 level of probability.

More perplexing, and perhaps attributable to chance, is the overall significant difference at the .01 level of probability for Subcategory 330: Mimetic Interpretation. *

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*It is appropriate to note that the sheer number of repeated subcategories tested in this study inevitably produces the occasional significant result by chance. Up to this point, however, even the chance occurrence of one in twenty comparisons at the .05 level of probability, has not prompted comment, since causal argument has been advanced for significant differences as they were obtained.

TABLE 18

RESPONSES TO THE STORY AND POEM COMBINED BY SEX: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES FOR COMBINED PROTOCOLS

Category/Subcategory	Mean Response %'s Male (N=120)	 Female (N=120)	F Ratio (df=1;238)	Prob.
Engagement	16.76	19.87	1.99	NS
Perception	34.07	31.34	0.84	NS
Interpretation	27.57	24.52	1.16	NS
Evaluation	15.65	19.30	2.61	NS
Miscellaneous	5.83	4.44	1.70	NS
Subcategory 110	1.84	2.29	0.36	NS
Subcategory 120	2.39	3.21	1.21	NS
Subcategory 130	11.77	13.25	0.65	NS
Subcategory 200	2.18	2.07	0.02	NS
Subcategory 210	2.38	2.53	0.04	NS
Subcategory 230	22.26	20.17	0.55	NS
Subcategory 240	1.75	1.74	0.00	NS
Subcategory 260	2.63	2.57	0.01	NS
Subcategory 300	1.62	1.09	0.94	NS
Subcategory 320	13.87	15.86	1.24	NS
Subcategory 330	6.67	3.13	10.57	**
Subcategory 340	3.56	2.72	0.94	NS
Subcategory 350	1.69	1.70	0.00	NS
Subcategory 400	5.68	4.69	0.98	NS
Subcategory 410	1.31	2.53	6.07	*
Subcategory 420	6.31	9.16	4.04	*
Subcategory 430	2.41	3.05	0.99	NS
Subcategory 500	5.64	4.53	1.04	NS

* p <.05
** p <.01

It is not at all clear why boys should make twice as many statements (6.67% as opposed to 3.13%) which see "the work as a heterocosm, another world to be connected with the one he knows from either his experience or his reading." (Purves, 1968, 35)

TABLE 19

RESPONSES TO "THE USE OF FORCE" BY SEX:
MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Category/Subcategory	Male (N=60)	Female (N=60)	F Ratio (df=1;118)	Prob.
Engagement	18.60	19.21	0.04	NS
Perception	32.93	30.69	0.29	NS
Interpretation	26.15	23.51	0.47	NS
Evaluation	17.15	20.80	1.24	NS
Miscellaneous	5.37	5.19	0.02	NS
Subcategory 110	1.96	1.33	0.64	NS
Subcategory 120	3.46	3.55	0.01	NS
Subcategory 130	13.00	13.27	0.01	NS
Subcategory 210	2.59	2.18	0.18	NS
Subcategory 230	24.51	24.32	0.08	NS
Subcategory 240	1.29	1.29	0.00	NS
Subcategory 260	1.95	1.19	0.00	NS
Subcategory 320	13.33	14.36	0.23	NS
Subcategory 330	6.33	2.88	6.06	*
Subcategory 340	2.62	3.17	0.24	NS
Subcategory 350	2.41	2.44	0.00	NS
Subcategory 400	5.59	5.40	0.02	NS
Subcategory 410	1.57	3.14	4.51	*
Subcategory 420	7.34	9.78	1.28	NS
Subcategory 430	2.65	2.62	0.00	NS
Subcategory 500	5.37	5.19	0.02	NS

* $p < .05$

As Tables 19 and 20 reveal, Mimetic Interpretation is the only subcategory which displays a significant difference for both "The Use of Force" and "Corner." It appears, as well, from an examination of this data that girls were slightly more emotionally involved with the story than they were with the poem. It is possible to suggest,

TABLE 20

RESPONSES TO "CORNER" BY SEX: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Category/Subcategory	Male (N=60)	Female (N=60)	F Ratio (df=1;118)	Prob.
Engagement	14.92	20.52	3.17	NS
Perception	35.22	32.00	0.56	NS
Interpretation	28.98	25.54	0.69	NS
Evaluation	14.15	17.79	1.38	NS
Miscellaneous	6.29	3.68	2.92	NS
Subcategory 110	1.72	3.25	1.43	NS
Subcategory 120	1.33	2.87	3.11	NS
Subcategory 130	10.54	13.23	1.04	NS
Subcategory 200	3.01	3.03	0.00	NS
Subcategory 210	2.18	2.88	0.39	NS
Subcategory 220	2.03	1.16	1.25	NS
Subcategory 230	20.01	17.02	0.62	NS
Subcategory 240	2.21	2.19	0.00	NS
Subcategory 260	3.31	3.96	0.26	NS
Subcategory 300	1.78	1.47	0.18	NS
Subcategory 320	14.41	17.16	1.10	NS
Subcategory 330	7.01	3.37	4.69	*
Subcategory 340	4.51	2.27	2.78	NS
Subcategory 400	5.78	3.98	1.48	NS
Subcategory 410	1.06	1.93	1.77	NS
Subcategory 420	5.28	8.54	3.13	NS
Subcategory 430	2.17	3.49	1.72	NS
Subcategory 500	6.29	3.68	2.92	NS

* $p < .05$

though with little degree of certainty, that this difference for Subcategory 410 could be attributed to a female protagonist for the story. Again, while girls made slightly more specific evaluations of the author's craft for both the story and the poem, neither frequency is of sufficient magnitude to produce significant differences. Only at grade eight, and only in response to "Corner" did girls make significantly more statements in Subcategory 420 than boys (11.06% versus 2.98%).

As expected, on a number of measures of fluency, girls responded with significantly more statements than boys. The mean total statements were significant at the .001 level of probability (18.46 and 14.95) for the story and poem combined, and at the .01 level of probability for the story (19.47 and 15.75) and the poem (17.48 and 14.15).

Despite the small numbers of students involved, analysis of responses by sex at each grade level was made, but the results of analysis of variance in this case add little to the more general conclusions concerning the total subjects (Appendix B, Tables G-N). The pattern is one of remarkable uniformity throughout the grades.

Responses of Subjects According to Ability

The two ability levels defined in this study are superior and average, with students designated into one of these two groups entirely on the basis of teacher recommendation. Discussion of the actual criteria used by individual teachers in nominating superior students will be dealt with in Chapter Five. For the moment, the patterns disclosed in the following analysis can be taken to represent at least a generalized picture of a combination of response modes most valued (and therefore most rewarded) by the teachers who provided the superior and average students at each of the three grade levels.

In their combined responses to the story and the poem (Table 21), the superior and average students revealed overall significant differences in two categories — Engagement and Evaluation. It is not

TABLE 21

RESPONSES OF SUPERIOR AND AVERAGE STUDENTS TO THE STORY AND POEM COMBINED: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES FOR COMBINED PROTOCOLS

	Mean Response %'s			
Category/Subcategory	Superior (N=120)	Average (N=120)	F Ratio (df=1;238)	Prob.
Engagement	15.05	21.57	8.99	**
Perception	31.03	34.39	1.27	NS
Interpretation	28.36	23.73	2.70	NS
Evaluation	20.86	14.09	9.24	**
Miscellaneous	4.52	5.75	1.32	NS
Subcategory 110	1.58	2.55	1.69	NS
Subcategory 120	2.49	3.12	0.72	NS
Subcategory 130	9.97	15.04	7.75	**
Subcategory 200	1.71	2.53	1.12	NS
Subcategory 210	2.64	2.27	0.25	NS
Subcategory 230	18.17	24.26	4.71	*
Subcategory 240	2.12	1.37	1.41	NS
Subcategory 260	3.33	1.87	4.02	*
Subcategory 300	1.32	1.39	0.02	NS
Subcategory 320	15.18	14.45	0.18	NS
Subcategory 330	5.28	4.52	0.46	NS
Subcategory 340	4.22	2.07	6.24	*
Subcategory 350	2.03	1.35	1.67	NS
Subcategory 400	5.66	4.71	0.90	NS
Subcategory 410	2.01	1.84	0.12	NS
Subcategory 420	9.74	5.73	8.12	**
Subcategory 430	3.42	2.04	4.66	*
Subcategory 500	4.52	5.75	1.32	NS

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

surprising that superior students responded with a reduced frequency for Engagement (15.05%) over that for average students (21.57%), a difference significant at the .01 level of probability. This comparative reticence in offering responses which indicate personal involvement repeats the gradual reduction in the percentage of such statements throughout the grades. In fact, the overall difference is directly attributable to disparities in the mean response percentages for this category at grades ten and twelve. At grade eight, superior and average students wrote almost identical percentages of Engagement responses (24.84% and 26.49%). Understandably, as well, the only subcategory of Engagement reflecting a significant difference of percentages between superior and average students is 130: Reaction to Content. Possibly as a result of teacher expectations, the superior student distances himself from the work by consciously avoiding statements of conjecture, identification, or by relating features of the literature to those in his own life.

The preference for Evaluation responses on the part of the superior students enters a slight variation into the inexorably consistent results of all other dimensions of this investigation. Yet the overall difference in this instance is even more clearly the direct result of a marked preference for this mode at grade twelve, where the difference is significant at the .001 level of probability. Again, the frequencies for grade eight are nearly identical (21.58% for superior students and 21.28% for average students), while a noticeable though non-significant decrease occurs at grade ten (17.19% to 12.09%). At the subcategory level, superior students responded significantly more often than average students for 420: Evaluation of Method, and 430: Evaluation of Vision. The point that needs emphasis is that the superior grade-twelve students applied 12.80% of their responses to direct, and sometimes complex, evaluations of the author's method. It seems clear, then, that an important criterion used by teachers in establishing the worth of the written responses of older students is an ability to come to grips with the formal and rhetorical elements of a literary work.

While overall significant differences were not recorded for the categories of Perception or Interpretatation, differences obtained at the subcategory level reveal important and expected differences between superior and average students. On the one hand, average students wrote a considerably higher percentage of statements for 230: Content (24.26%) than did superior students (18.17%), while the more able group responded more often to 260: Tone (3.33%) than did the average group (1.39%). For Subcategory 340: Typological Interpretation the superior students doubled (4.22%) the responses of the average students (2.07%). These patterns are again symptomatic of a general movement away from simple retelling to the more abstract concerns of generalizing and theorizing on the part of the superior students.

As Tables 22 and 23 show, "The Use of Force" and "Corner" produced rather different patterns of response when approached through the variable of student ability. "The Use of Force" produced significant differences between superior and average students only for the category of Engagement, while "Corner" provided differences significant at the .05 level of probability for Perception, Interpretation, and Evaluation. For the more emotionally charged story, the average students echoed the overall pattern of significantly more personal reactions to content, with the difference again expressing itself only at grades ten and twelve. For the poem, the preferences are variable,

TABLE 22

RESPONSES OF SUPERIOR AND AVERAGE STUDENTS TO "THE USE OF FORCE": MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

Category/Subcategory	Mean Response %'s Superior (N=60)	 Average (N=60)	F Ratio (df=1;118)	Prob.
Engagement	14.60	23.21	8.33	**
Perception	33.39	30.22	0.58	NS
Interpretation	25.26	24.40	0.05	NS
Evaluation	21.96	15.99	3.36	NS
Miscellaneous	4.80	5.76	0.41	NS
Subcategory 110	1.09	2.20	2.01	NS
Subcategory 120	2.94	4.07	0.91	NS
Subcategory 130	10.01	16.26	6.08	**
Subcategory 210	2.70	2.07	0.42	NS
Subcategory 230	21.74	26.09	1.09	NS
Subcategory 240	1.93	0.65	5.61	*
Subcategory 260	2.75	0.38	12.80	***
Subcategory 320	12.78	14.91	0.97	NS
Subcategory 330	5.02	4.20	0.33	NS
Subcategory 340	4.18	1.61	5.64	*
Subcategory 350	2.76	2.10	0.58	NS
Subcategory 400	5.35	5.65	0.05	NS
Subcategory 410	2.32	2.39	0.01	NS
Subcategory 420	10.82	6.30	4.49	*
Subcategory 430	3.48	1.79	4.53	*
Subcategory 500	4.80	5.76	0.41	NS

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

with superior students writing significantly higher percentages of statements of Interpretation and Evaluation, and significantly lower percentages of statements of Perception than average students.

TABLE 23

RESPONSES OF SUPERIOR AND AVERAGE STUDENTS TO "CORNER": MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Category/Subcategory	Superior (N=60)	Average (N=60)	F Ratio (df=1;118)	Prob.
Engagement	15.52	19.93	1.94	NS
Perception	28.67	38.56	5.54	*
Interpretation	31.45	23.07	4.23	*
Evaluation	19.75	12.19	6.20	*
Miscellaneous	4.24	5.74	0.94	NS
Subcategory 110	2.06	2.91	0.43	NS
Subcategory 120	2.03	2.17	0.02	NS
Subcategory 130	9.94	13.83	2.19	NS
Subcategory 200	1.69	4.35	4.13	*
Subcategory 210	2.59	2.47	0.01	NS
Subcategory 220	1.58	1.61	0.00	NS
Subcategory 230	14.60	22.44	4.40	*
Subcategory 240	2.32	2.09	0.04	NS
Subcategory 260	3.90	3.37	0.18	NS
Subcategory 300	2.26	0.99	3.08	NS
Subcategory 320	17.57	13.99	1.88	NS
Subcategory 330	5.54	4.85	0.16	NS
Subcategory 340	4.26	2.52	1.66	NS
Subcategory 400	5.98	3.77	2.25	NS
Subcategory 410	1.70	1.28	0.41	NS
Subcategory 420	8.65	5.17	3.61	NS
Subcategory 430	3.37	2.30	1.13	NS
Subcategory 500	4.24	5.74	0.94	NS

* $p < .05$

These differences between the story and poem for superior and average students are generally supported in the analysis of grade level responses (Appendix B). A reasonable overall expectation, that superior students would respond with a significantly higher proportion of statements of Interpretation than average students, was restricted to differences at the grade-eight and grade-ten levels. For example, grade-eights wrote 22.62% Interpretation responses to "Corner" as opposed to a mere 6.60% for average students, a difference significant at the .001 level of probability. Similarly, in response to "The Use of Force" superior grade-ten students wrote 12.52% more interpretational statements than average students. By grade twelve, superior and average students are writing very nearly the same percentage of Interpretation statements -- 33.03% and 34.61% respectively -- to the story and poem combined.

A Comparison With Other Studies (2)

As indicated in Chapters Two and Three, the use of an Australian sample in the main study invited substantive as well as cross-cultural comparisons with studies whose overriding purpose had been to build up a cross-sectional picture of response based on the Purves categories and subcategories. Apart from the United States NAEP study and the IEA study, the individual researchers who provided data for a comparison with the findings so far presented were Purves (1968), Pollock (1972), Somers (1972), and Applebee (1973). It is the purpose of the following discussion to isolate some of the contradictory patterns which emerge across these studies and the present investigation, and to suggest a range of possible causes for these discrepancies.

First, the present study differs from others to be discussed in explicitly seeking reactions to a short story and a poem. The emphasis in each of the other four studies was on fiction. Pollock, for example, used a total of six short stories, randomly rotated in pairs through three sub-groups. Somers used only two stories, distinguishing a more complex theme-oriented story from a simpler plot-oriented story. Applebee was unique in not asking for reactions to a particular story or stories selected by the researcher. His procedure was to ask the individual subject to supply his own titles within the general category of "favorite books" or ones that are "known well." Purves, as has been indicated, used the same story as the one employed in the present investigation, and a detailed discussion of his findings has been dealt with above as a follow-up to the analysis for "The Use of Force."

Each of the comparison studies purports to elicit "free-response-type-reactions" to literature. However, directions given the students range from Applebee's appropriately open, "Pick any story you know well and write about it," to Pollock's rather more structured statement:

> After reading the assigned story, each student is to write -- freely and completely -- describing the feelings, ideas, opinions or reactions which occurred to him while reading or at the end of reading the story. (236)

Somers invited the students to write their "personal reactions" to the stories they had read. Purves, however, gives no indication of the exact instructions given to students. His account, in the appendix to the IEA study (Purves et al., 1973), can reasonably be taken as symptomatic of his general procedure. There, he reports: "The students were given no directions concerning how they should respond. They were asked only to read the story and write about it." (420) The present study, as explained in Chapter Three, follows the nondirective procedures employed by Applebee and Purves, entering what was hoped would be a significant audience variable by asking students to write "as much for other members of the class as for a teacher."

The studies by Purves, Pollock, and Somers used an American sample, while Applebee's population was English. Again, while there is no evidence on the socioeconomic background of Purves' subjects, both Pollock and Somers used students who were decidedly middle class. Applebee's subjects, like those in this study, were drawn from a range of comprehensive and selective schools. Finally, there were minor differences in the grade and age groupings in each of the five studies. Purves and Applebee used thirteen- and seventeen-year-olds, a population which corresponds with grades eight and twelve in Australia. Somers' sample covered grades seven, nine, and eleven, while Pollock's study compared the responses of students in grades nine and eleven with those of college freshmen.

Table 24 presents an overview of the combined response percentages at the category level for the Purves, Pollock, Somers, and Applebee studies, with the results for this investigation repeated as a basis for comparison. What emerges most clearly from an examination of this data are the differences in rank order for the major categories among all five studies. The primacy, in this study, of Perception has already been mentioned. In this regard, the Purves and Applebee data exhibit the same preference, but at much higher levels of occurrence -- 39.95% and 53.35% respectively. Again, the results of this study are rather more in line with the findings of other researchers (Squire, 1964, and Cooper, 1969) who point to Interpretation as a favored mode of response. The combined Australian sample wrote a greater proportion of statements in this category than did the subjects in any of the other four studies. In fact, Interpretation ranks fourth in three of the four studies. By contrast, the Australian students as a whole wrote the smallest proportion of statements of Evaluation (17.47%). All other students responded with more than approximately 25% of their total responses in this category. With the rather glaring exception of Applebee's English sample who wrote only 4.30% of Engagement responses, the Australian figure of 18.32% is at least comparable with that of the remaining studies. Finally, the students in this study are unique in providing slightly more than 5% of statements classified as Miscellaneous.

TABLE 24

SUMMARY OF DIFFERENCES IN FIVE STUDIES
USING PURVES' CATEGORIES: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES
FOR EACH CATEGORY

Category		Purves	Pollock	Somers	Applebee	This Study
I	(Engagement)	21.25	25.60	19.00	4.30	18.32
II	(Perception)	39.95	23.95	25.51	53.35	32.71
III	(Interpretation)	11.55	21.90	18.77	11.60	26.04
IV	(Evaluation)	24.69	27.40	32.51	26.97	17.47
V	(Miscellaneous)	2.22	0.81	4.34	3.80	5.13

Most of the anomalies which occur both within and across the data being discussed here can be attributed to differences in the dimensions of the task setting. For example, Pollock's students received a virtually structured invitation to deal with "feelings" (Engagement), "ideas" (Perception and Interpretation), "opinions" (Evaluation), and "reactions" (Engagement and Evaluation). They responded in kind with the most even distribution across the four major categories within an overall range of 5.50 percentage points, representing a high of 27.40% for Evaluation and a low of 21.90% for Interpretation. Moreover, they made virtually no Miscellaneous responses. Somers' subjects received an equally structured directive to evaluate what they had read, to provide their "personal reactions," which they did to the extent of 32.51% of their total responses. The evidence of these two studies argues an ability and desire on the part of all students to answer the question as set. This sensitivity to cues provided within the setting of the writing task almost disqualifies these results as "free responses."

What, then, happens when the task itself is truly open, that is, devoid of the cognitive or affective structuring cues around which the students tend to marshall their writing? The answer, as provided in this study, and in the results obtained by Purves and Applebee, would suggest that students proceed, rather predictably, to write in the manner in which they are accustomed. Or, to paraphrase Britton (1968), the responses represent not "a legacy of past satisfactions," but instead bear the imprint of past and present instruction. Therefore, within the sampling constraints which mark each of the studies employing nondirected responses, the Australian students reflect a pedagogy which combines Perception and Interpretation, while the American and English students echo instructional practices which combine Perception and Evaluation.

This is not to deny, however, the important directive effects of the stimulus as documented in both the NAEP and IEA studies. For example, by asking for discussion of stories already known well, Applebee acknowledged that he was bypassing the initial process of assimilation "in order to look more directly at the meaning stories are given by the child, rather than at the process of giving the story that meaning." (1973, 189) Since his students were considerably removed in time from any immediate responses to the literature they chose to discuss, the slight attention (4.30%) paid to Engagement is entirely understandable. Moreover, Pollock does acknowledge that the combined means presented in Table 24 obscure differences in the responses obtained after the reading of different stories by his sub-groups. These differences were rather more marked at grade nine than at grade eleven. Somers' subjects, while not forsaking an overall preference for Evaluation imposed by the instructions they received, wrote fewer statements of Evaluation and more of Interpretation for the more difficult theme-oriented story. Such findings were responsible for the (confounded) pattern of expectation in this study that students would respond differently to a short story as opposed to a poem.

Therefore, Table 25 which contrasts the results obtained for this study with those for the four individual studies already mentioned at an approximation of the grade-eight and grade-twelve levels, must be approached with these constraints in mind. The interaction of maturation with the effects of literature instruction are most clearly in evidence in the results presented for the present investigation. The other studies reveal patterns of change between age thirteen and age seventeen which are both counter-intuitive, and against the grain of the supplementary findings of other restricted and large scale studies. The major parallel movements of decline in Engagement responses and increase in Interpretation responses with increasing age is entirely in line with the NAEP study's conclusion. The increased Engagement by the older American students (Purves and Pollock) and the English students (Applebee) remains, for this investigator, enigmatic. Again, the dramatic increase in Interpretation responses, amounting to a rise of 21.29% between ages thirteen and seventeen, for the Australian students is unmatched in any of the other national groups.

TABLE 25

COMPARISON OF FIVE STUDIES USING PURVES' CATEGORIES
AT TWO APPROXIMATE AGE LEVELS:
MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES FOR EACH CATEGORY

Category	Approx. Age	Purves	Pollock	Somers	Applebee	This Study
I (Engagement)	13	18.13	24.30	20.44	2.00	25.66
	17	24.38	26.90	16.78	6.60	10.92
II (Perception)	13	33.24	27.70	23.90	75.40	34.06
	17	46.67	20.20	28.32	31.30	33.69
III (Interpretation)	13	10.32	19.40	17.74	3.90	12.53
	17	12.79	24.40	20.45	19.30	33.82
IV (Evaluation)	13	35.09	28.20	34.09	15.85	21.43
	17	14.29	26.60	29.64	38.10	16.35
V (Miscellaneous)	13	2.22	0.00	4.10	2.90	5.41
	17	2.87	1.62	4.71	4.70	5.09

The differences in Perception responses for the two age levels in the four comparison studies are as inconsistent as the results for the Australian sample are consistent (34.06% and 33.69%). Two of the American samples (Purves and Somers) exhibit increases in this category, though the rise of 4.42% for Somers' subjects is rather less substantial than the 13.43% increase for Purves' students. Undoubtedly the most dramatic movement between age levels which Table 25 reveals is the fall in Perception responses for Applebee's English subjects from a massive 75.04% at age thirteen to the rather more consistent figure of 31.30% at age seventeen. Perhaps, within the setting of Applebee's task, the younger students took quite literally the invitation to re-tell a favorite story. The only light that Applebee sheds on his own results is to comment that much that was "interpretative, or at least highly analytic [as he applied the Purves schema] falls into the 'perception' category." (1973, 193) Again, it seems vitally important to make qualitative distinctions among the paraphrases or summaries of the action which both thirteen- and seventeen-year-olds in the present investigation appear to use with relentless consistency.

With respect to Evaluation, the Australian students exhibit a decline of preference between ages thirteen and seventeen which is paralleled in the three American samples. This finding had been suggested in the NAEP report. Also, at least as far as the more gifted students were concerned, the IEA study had unearthed a preference among the English sample for Evaluation. So that the increase from 15.85% to 38.10% reported by Applebee is not unexpected.

In summary, therefore, it is suggested that the differences in the category responses across the five studies are due to the interaction of a complex of factors, including at least the following:

(1) differences in the combined stimuli used to elicit responses; (2) differences in the setting of the task, that is the actual instructions given prior to the collection of the protocols; (3) cultural and grade level differences in the sampled population; (4) and — somewhat more tentatively -- problems endemic in the Purves system itself.

Summary

This chapter has reported the major quantitative and comparative findings of the study. The most notable outcome of the tests of significance by genre, categories and subcategories of response, sex, and ability was the conjunction of stable patterns of preference with consistently significant differences across grade levels.

At grade eight the consistently preferred mode of response was Perception, but by grades ten and twelve a virtually interchangeable preference for Perception and Interpretation was in evidence. Howeve both the short story and the poem produced significant decreases in Engagement responses between grades eight and twelve, and between grades ten and twelve. This movement was counterbalanced by highly significant increases in Interpretation responses between grades eight and ten, and between grades eight and twelve.

When the overall or grade-level response patterns for the story were compared with those for the poem an almost identical pattern of responses emerged. Only at the levels of significantly less retelling, and significantly greater problems with the language of poetic narrative were the responses to the poem differentiated from those to the story.

Differences in response to the story or poem by sex were virtually non-existent. Superior students did, however, respond with significantly more Evaluation, and significantly less Engagement than average students. They also provided significantly more perceptional and interpretive statements in their responses to the poem, than did average students.

Despite the overall consistency of written responses to the story and poem, the results of the response preference questionnaire suggested distinct patterns of expectation and rejection when short stories and poems were encountered in a school setting. The grade-eight students rated matters of content and structure as most important for fiction, while the grade-ten and grade-twelve students expected to focus on the formal matters of literary devices and language in the study of poetry. All students accorded very little importance to the propriety or significance of the topic of both literary forms, but students in grades eight and ten expected to bring their personal reactions to the classroom-based study of both genres far more frequently than did grade-twelve students.

The study found that the responses of Australian students bore a closer resemblance to patterns of preference reported for American students, than those reported for English or New Zealand students. It was suggested, as well, that conflicting data in reported cross-sectional studies of response were as much the result of differences in the combined stimuli used to elicit response or differences in the task setting, either with respect to instrumentation or the actual instructions given prior to the collection of protocols, as the result of cultural and grade-level differences in the sampled populations.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS: QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS AND FOLLOW-UP DATA

The foregoing discussion of the response patterns of groups of students distinguished by grade, sex, and ability, to the story and poem combined, or to the story and poem taken separately, has necessarily focused on a set of empirically manageable, yet mythical, series of mean percentages of statements in each category and subcategory averaged out for each of the groups and sub-groups in the study. A subsequent analysis of the content, purpose, and quality of individual protocols was undertaken so that subjective judgments could be made of such issues as the evidence of developmental patterns of response, the distinguishing features in the responses of students labelled superior or average by their teachers, the overall analytic power of the Purves and Rippere system, and indices of a sense of audience evident in student writing.

The various stages in this analysis were either informed or constrained by the specific characteristics of the Purves system. It was necessary to accept, for example, that the categories or elements of response were neutral, that a response of Perception was of no more innate value than one of Engagement. On the other hand, as Purves admits, there are criteria by which the adequacy of an expressed response can be judged:

> The value of any order lies primarily in the way in which it is presented, in the accuracy of the perception, in the cogency of the interpretation, in the persuasiveness of the evaluative position, in the intensity of the testament of engagement. (1968, 59)

The problem with such a characterization was twofold. First, the rhetorical criteria by which statements of Perception and Interpretation could be assessed were qualitatively different from those which applied to statements of Evaluation or Engagement. Second, Purves' claim that the elements themselves were atheoretical seemed patently false. The disposition of the elements of Perception, Interpretation, and Evaluation seemed tied largely to traditional areas of literary criticism. Since the overall purpose of the analysis was to establish age-relevant patterns of response, the application of rhetorical factors such as those suggested by Diederich (1974) -- Ideas, Organization, Wording, Flavor, Relevance, Movement, and Style -- emerged naturalistically from an examination of individual protocols and were not imposed in an *a priori* fashion.

This decision to focus on the range of responses within each of Purves' four modes at the expense of tracing an expected, developing verbal facility was somewhat reinforced in the evidence of criteria provided by teachers involved in the study. The eight participating teachers were asked to provide three or four reasons supporting their nomination of "superior" students. Without exception, as the following statements indicate, the single, most important criterion referred to by all teachers was writing ability:

- Well documented, expressed work, usually with a mature approach.
- Ability to respond, either orally or in writing to literary material in an extended manner.
- The really superior students appear to have a natural flair for expression -- clear, concise, and unambiguous. Variety of sentence structure and style.

- Natural ability to express themselves is very important.
- The selected students were not necessarily the ones who had achieved the highest academic results, but rather the ones who were "master-apprentices" of the language.
- These students are able to write and respond maturely. They are able to reason logically, giving arguments for and against particular points.
- These are the students with above average vocabulary and employ varied sentence constructions.
- Ability to write about literature with obvious depth of thought, and to use conventional literary terminology in their reactions.

Thus, there is a prima facie case, given the quantitative preference for Perception and Interpretation in the upper grades, for believing that teachers value the tightly argued, analytic literary essay over the response that is personalistic or evaluative. Perhaps inevitably, the teacher equates growth in literary sensibility or the complexity of literary response with a developing felicity of written expression. The following analysis will tacitly accept this equation, yet look rather more to Purves' elements and subcategories for changes in the pattern of response, than to changes in the syntax of the response.

Engagement-Involvement Responses

Although somewhat extreme examples in their own right, the following protocols convey a sense of growth within the preferred mode of Engagement:

> The story was beutifully written and was very emotional and I would have cryed had I not been in the classroom. It was not in the lest bit boring and I couldn't take my eyes off it,
>
> The story is beutiful and I can't think how to describe it, but I'm trying. It makes me think how brave people can be but on being so brave and not telling her parents of her diesease she was only making it worse for herself.
>
> At first I thought the doctor was a women the way he was so gently with the child and the soft words he spoke to her, But it just shows that with a job like a doctor or something simerler you have to treat your patient with as much gentleness, as a new born baby, even if the patient is old and grumpty or young and frightened.

The story meant a lot to me, mainly about what I last mentioned, that you should always be kind and gentle. (8-A/F)

The contents of this piece of prose made me angry, nearly as angry as the doctor was. I put myself in his position and acted out his emotions as I read them.

The first two phrases told me that there was something odd about the Olson family. The intense secrecy about the daughter's illness was seemingly ridiculous.

In a normal situation the parents will try and help the doctor analyse their child but not so with the Olsons.

The piece of prose builds up into an explosive situation from what is usually a very simple operation.

I was angered at the child blunt refusal to co-operate. Besides having possible diphtheria the child, in my opinion, needs physiciatric treatment or a good spanking.

A possible hidden meaning to the story is that appearances are decieving - the unusual attractiveness of the child is over reigned by her stubborness and violent behavior.

The parents struck me as being very weak and somewhat simple.

The mother was false in incredibly stupid. It was probably she that coaxed the innate fear of doctors into her daughter.

"Such a nice man. He won't hurt you." Only a woman who is below basic intelligence would tell her daughter that a doctor may hurt someone.

As I continued reading about the exploits of the Olsons and the doctor I became more and more enraged. After all, this doctor had innocently come to the house after being requested to attend to a sick girl.

It seems very normal and is; until the doctor confronts the child in question.

It was obvious the child was scared but in my opinion the doctor's original approach to the child was very good.

I found myself barracking for the doctor as he slowly overcame the little monster that was supposed to be a patient.

I may have come on stronger with the parents but I entirely agreed with all the actions of the doctor.

It is clear that the doctor disliked the child immensely, as I did, but he was a good doctor in that he insisted on finding the cause of illness.

The fury of the child is understandable but if she had cooperated in the first place, there would have been no force applied.

I think that use of force is necessary in some cases, especially after a reasonable approach has failed.

The situation was slightly unrealistic in that two grown men took so long to overpower one little girl.

The childs possessive nature was the cause of the trouble.

The doctors actions near the end were somewhat unreasonable and perhaps it may have been better to try again when his own fury had subsided and also the child's stubborness and anger has disappeared.

It was a ridiculous situation for anyone to get into. (12-A/F)

The thoroughgoing sentimentality of the grade eight piece is uncluttered either by thematic consideration, or by any detailed reactions to character motivation. The dominant emotions expressed by each student range from an unnamed sense of cloying to degrees of anger which are paralleled in the affective reactions of a wide range of students at each of the three grade levels.

The overall results of quantitative analysis have suggested a clear and gradual censoring out of expressions of personal involvement with increase in age. However, the following tabulation of raw frequencies for each of the subcategories of Engagement provides equally clear evidence of the persistence of at least three of these stances through to grade twelve:

Subcategory	(100)	(110)	(120)	(130)
Grade 12	3	21	33	135
Grade 10	12	22	18	179
Grade 8	17	31	58	145

Only with respect to statements of general engagement ("I enjoyed the story.") was there any overall abandonment of these responses by the grade twelves. In fact, such statements were found in the writing of only three grade-twelve students. Again, when the individual protocols of these older students were examined, only twenty-two of the eighty individual protocols were marked by a complete absence of Engagement responses. It remains to be shown, therefore, whether continuing concerns for matters of assent, moral taste, retelling in a form different from that provided in the text, conjecture, and identification were qualitatively different across the three grade levels of the study.

As reported below (see p.136), this analysis can be simplified by reorganizing the discussion of Engagement into the most frequently occurring responses of conjecture, identification, and digressions. Again, although it is in the nature of written responses to force students to expressions of a more mature, objective account of their experience of literature, the suggestions of both Barnes _et al_. (1973) and Beach (1972) were reinforced. At levels ranging from grade eight to college freshmen it was clear, in both the cited studies and the present one, that the personal response was important in establishing a basis from which more detached reactions could grow.

The few examples of pure conjecture, defined by Purves (1968) as "guesses about the past or future . . . generally based not on the information of the text but on knowledge of the world at large," (13) were confined to statements by grade-eight students that Mathilda was "probably spoiled a bit," because "she didn't want to open her mouth for the doctor." One other grade-eight student explained the sudden departure of the policeman in "Corner" in these terms: "Maybe it's his lunch break or he has to watch someone else."

An allied form of conjecture persisted through the grades, in which students evinced varying degrees of egocentrism by proposing suggestions for improvement or even dangers in the perceived message of the literature:

> Overall I think it was a good poem, but I think some people may get the wrong impression of the police, that they are their enemies and not their friends. (8-A/F)
>
> Doctors are cruel, unjust, inhuman, brutal, impatient and generally useless . . . The author must be an anti-doctor supporter to write such a story and he must be trying to bring out the brutality of doctors. (10-A/M)

> If the child had acted in an orderly manner the situation would have been a lot smoother, but wouldn't have altered the final outcome, as the doctor gets to see her throat anyway . . . If he had talked to the child alone and explained that diphtheria was a serious illness but it could be cured if discovered soon enough then maybe she would have submitted peacefully. (12-S/M)

Even at grade twelve, then, there is a lingering refusal to grant the literature its virtual existence.

Autobiographical digressions yielded the most interesting range of outcomes in terms of insights into important aspects of the response process. On the least productive, and at times disturbing level, such statements presented total blocks to the development of a complete response. One grade eight student reported: "One thing I didn't like was the child bleeding. I can't stand blood being mentioned." (8-A/F) Far more explicit warning for the champions of bibliotherapy was found in the following:

> Dear Sir: This thing is not what I would call a story. My brother just died of cancer 3 weeks ago, which changed my attitude towards doctors completely. I now understand them. No human doctor would do what that (dam) doctor did. Furthermore I think that the story I just read was the worst, meanest, and dumbest story I've ever read or heard about.!!!
> P.S. I shall never read another thing that William Carlos Williams ever writes. (8-A/F)

The extremity of the latter position can certainly be granted, since a sampling of the parallel instances covered more optimistic views, or simply a more thoroughgoing sense of "being there:"

> If I was the parent I would feel the same way they do, so I don't really blame them when they kept apollogising. (8-A/M)
>
> The poem makes me feelsorry for the poor boy and makes me wonder what made him get into trouble with the police. (10-A/M)
>
> Guiltyness automatically comes into my mind as I read through the poem. It makes me feel as if I was there, feeling uneasy and sharing the youth's guilty conscience. I think of rebellion against the law, authority. I would have probably run. (12-A/M)

Equally instructive were occasionally lengthy digressions, shading off into Subcategory 110: Reaction to Literature, or to Miscellaneous responses, where students provided accounts of the various stances employed as they approached the reading of a story or poem:

> Generally, I dislike poetry but occasionally I find a poem which appeals to me perhaps only slightly or perhaps greatly so. Australian poetry, that is, written by poets such as Henry Lawson or Banjo Patterson appeal to me overall much more than any other style. Although this poem in my mind does not come under this category I still enjoyed it. I find writing about poetry difficult, thus I shall leave what I have written to explain my ideas about poetry. (8-A/M)
>
> When I finish a story (like the doctor I'm taking a shot in the dark to see if I can develop something) I find it interesting to look back and re-read segments. Things take on a new light and I realise that everything an author puts into a good story is there for a purpose and he either develops it later in the story or it helps to get the reader attuned, ready or prepared for the conclusion. (10-S/M)
>
> Whenever I read a story like that my first reaction is to analyze it and writing what you think about it on paper makes it become clear. I s'pose if I was asked to do the same thing again and read the same story a few years later my reactions and what I thought about the story would be very different. (10-S/F)

Perhaps predictably, although the grade-twelve students were not averse to applauding the story or poem "because it expressed a real situation in a form that the reader can associate and identify with," their statements of Engagement were generally marked by reference to a generalized set of readers:

> The story has a certain alluring quality which makes us want to keep reading to find the outcome of the struggle. (12-S/F)

or to rather more tentative (and at times apologetic) acknowledgements that they had been moved in certain ways:

> Possibly I am overly impressionable and sensitive to these emotional fluctuations, but I tend to accredit the author with the astonishing ability to involve the reader. (12-S/M)

The heavy implication, in the writing of the majority of the older students, was that they had learned well an instructional message which advised against the undisciplined expression of a subjective response. When such admissions were made they tended to be more overt in the work of students labelled average, and rather more circumspect in the writings of those labelled superior.

Perception Responses

Complete paraphrases or retellings of the story or poem were confined to the writings of average grade-eight students. One of these protocols began:

> The Olsons were new patients to the doctor. They had left a message that their daughter was sick and they needed his help. Mrs. Olson was the one who had let him in. She did not say much at all. He found out that the girl was in the kitchen because it was warm in there. (8-A/M)

The account continued in this vein, producing a total of thirty-four statements, all coded as 230: Content. Although surprisingly few students employed retelling to the exclusion of all other subcategories, their consistently lengthy paraphrases formed a large proportion of the 24.10% of Content statements at the grade-eight level.

Applying the criteria for scoring paraphrases proposed in the NAEP study (Appendix D), the sheer length of these responses to the story rendered them generally adequate. For the poem, on the other hand, the adequacy of attempts at retelling falls off rather sharply:

> The whole idea of the poem is about a fairly young fellow and his confrontation with a motorcycle cop. At the beginning the young man then describes his actions towards the motor-cycle cop. After that the surroundings are described by the young man. Then comes the climax. The young man starts to really feel his battle. There is no communication between them except the occasional

> glance that is exchanged. The young man is imagining himself going. Just then the young man is completely brought back as the motor-cycle cop races away feeling very smug in his power. (8-A/F)

> The Poem has a fair bit of slang words in it and is about a young man walking along smoking and chewing gum but he spits out the gum and stands their watching a policeman watching him. He thinks the policeman is suspecting him of litting (loitering) and he know that he is. He is to afraid to through out the smoke other wise he would pounce on him for litting and then wack the big charge on him and book him for litting. The police man starts the bike and takes of down the street. There is a lot of descripion in the poem about the cop. It is a good poem about the cop and the man walking on the other side of the road. Cars going between him. (8-A/M)

Understandably, most of the statements devoted to literal detailing of the facts of plot, character, or setting occurred within the context of momentary or overall attempts to provide supporting evidence for expressions of personal involvement, or from a base of more or less sophisticated attempts to interpret or evaluate the literature.

> The girl was pretty and this paragraph in the story showed it so well you could picture her. He showed how the girl felt with lines like "The child was fairly eating me up with her cold, steady eyes, and no expression to her face whatsoever" and "her expression hadn't changed." (8-S/M)

> The doctor sounded like he was very strict. He didn't like anybody using the phrase "he won't hurt you" or "he is a nice man." . . . The story sounded as if it was in the time when there was no loungeroom heater, only a fireplace in the kitchen. Also it was only three dollars for a house call while nowadays it is more like eight to twelve dollars. (8-A/F)

> She is also a sore loser when eventually she is defeated. After a long struggle the doctor and her father hold her down long enough so the doctor can look at her tonsils and see if they are covered with membrane. When he has finally succeeded in doing so she screams and instead of being in a force of defense she flairs up and attacks. Forcefully trying to get out of her father's lap and attack him. (10-A/M)

> The girl, Mathilda, was blonde-haired, quiet, attractive and "strong as a heifer." Her face was expressionless and her eyes were cold and steady - - a person capable of keeping her secrets and fears bottled up within her, without giving herself away on the surface. On the second and third pages of the story, she proved that she was also capable of physically concealing her fears. For example she clawed the doctor's eyes, and crushed the wooden spatula to splinters in her mouth. (10-S/F)

Leaving aside statements coded as 230: Content, over half the responses of Perception at grade eight referred to problems of comprehension. The remaining 57 statements which related to questions of technique or form displayed a remarkably narrow focus. Almost all of the twenty statements describing the language of the work revealed a preoccupation with the licence Williams employed in his presentation of dialogue, or his purposeful attempt to represent dialect:

> The story has no inverted commas and so making it a lot hard to understand. (8-A/M)
>
> While reading the story I was constantly having difficulty because of an apparent lack of proper punctuation. Also there were a couple of spelling mistakes which I suspect were unintentional. (8-S/F)
>
> The language of the parents was not very good. (8-A/F)

One student mentioned "similie," and the few structural discussions centred on the use of climax in "The Use of Force":

> The development of a high climax in the story has been accomplished. In the beginning, the author explains all the details for example: "The child was fully dressed sitting on her father's lap near the window." Here a very low climax was presented. Gradually the climax grew as he went along. When the child in the story refused to open her mouth the climax mounted. As the author phrases it "The battle began." The highest point of the climax was, when, nearing the end of the story, the doctor overcame the girl by force, and uncovered her secret, then the climax was over, and as in the beginning the author finished with an unusual ending, leaving the child crying in defeat, a low climax. (8-S/F)

And from a different school:

> It was a story that started with a relatively low climax which built up to a high fast moving climax. (8-A/F)

Most of the descriptions of tone, mood, pace, or point of view occur as isolated and undeveloped statements in the writing of a small number of students. In fact, almost one third of the responses classified as 260 were contained in this account of the poem:

> The feeling of hopelessness that the poet puts across is seen through the eyes of the 'cornered culprit.' Maybe it was just a brief glance that caused the ultimate sensation of fear -- the warning tingling that something should happen. Was the cop's gaze a gaze of mistrust, suspicion or hatred? Or just an innocent questioning look or curious stare? then there is the waiting. Hatred for this is something both share. The seconds turn to minutes as both wait for something to give. The feeling that both are trapped in time and word, unable to move, as two gunslingers wait for the other to fire, then to draw themselves much quicker then to shoot and in that brief moment to have victory. It is as though one has the power to captivate and hold the other's glance so he is doomed to stare into the cool, yet piercing and condeming eyes. Then the cop rides off and a feeling of relief sweeps over the other even though he himself is not victorious.
>
> The poem is obviously modern and quite unique in some of its phrases and lines. The poem intrigues me, because it is simply so different. There is no set rhythm yet there is a distinct beat which is falling on different words all the time. There is no rhyming yet the poem is definately a poem because of the allowable shortening of phrases like thoughts pulsing through the poet's mind and forming slowly, so as they are a muddle of words and meanings, although this goes beyond the surface view. (8-S/F)

What distinguishes the writing of this grade eight girl is just that ability to go "beyond the surface view" of content which preoccupied most of her contemporaries.

Just as the stringency of scoring by paradigm revealed very few protocols devoted wholly to paraphrase, so also the demands of wholistic scoring unearthed even fewer protocols whose major concern was the listing of formal/rhetorical issues. Even in the following example, which focuses on the structural components of the short story, most of the discrete issues which the writer discusses carry an evaluative freighting:

In his short story, Williams has effectively combined the basic principles of the short story to create a compact but well developed story.

The beginning of "The Use of Force" is necessarily brief. Action starts in the second paragraph and is well concluded at the climax of the story. This contributes to the last movement of action.

Because interest is focused on the child, Williams is able to develop his story and characters around this point. Thus the emotional involvement of the characters adds to the success of the story. Therefore the frustration and anger of the doctor, the child's fear and self determination, the mother's anger and anguish and the father's shame and fear are clearly seen and felt.

Williams wisely introduced no distractions such as background information, irrelevant characters or descriptive passages. This results in the intense unity of action which builds up till the climax which is also the conclusion. As Edgar Allen Poe said "Every word should contribute to the planned effect" and "The story should end at its climax."

"The Use of Force" displays the characteristic features of the short story. It is concise, has a centre of interest, it involves the reader immediately in the story, has no irrelevancies and creates a single impression. Williams combines these techniques with an interesting plot, well used language and lifelike characters, resulting in a well structured, well developed and entertaining short-story. (12-S/F)

A tabulation of the actual frequencies for subcategories of Perception, with the exception of 230: Content, at grades ten and twelve provides substantial evidence of a developing commitment to discussions of the formal and technical aspects of the works:

	Subcategory	(200)	(210)	(220)	(240)	(250)	(260)	(270)	(280)
Grade 12	Story	2	15	1	18	13	14	5	0
	Poem	3	31	30	36	14	54	14	2
	TOTAL	5	46	31	54	27	68	19	2
Grade 10	Story	9	14	0	6	6	9	1	1
	Poem	16	14	6	10	1	24	2	0
	TOTAL	25	28	6	16	7	33	3	1

The marked difference in Subcategory 200 statements, which largely mirror a lack of understanding at the levels of language or action, has already been discussed. What is of far more importance, given the limitations for objective notations provided in the story and poem as unique artistic constructs, is the range of differences both between grades and genres. The grade-twelve students made considerably more responses to the poem than did the grade-tens with respect to matters of language, literary devices, the relation of technique to content, structure, tone, atmosphere, point of view, and literary classification. The story, on the other hand, produced notably fewer statements in most of these formal areas at both grade levels than did the poem. A clear exception was the consistency of discussions of structure at grade twelve for both the story and the poem, whereas at grade ten the limited structural discussions were confined to the story. Also, the language of both story and poem called forth equal numbers of statements at grade ten.

As was the case at grade eight, a large proportion of the corpus of linguistic elements which received attention by students at grades ten and twelve referred to typographical idiosyncrasies in "The Use of Force." Particularly at grade ten this feature of the story produced expressions of disapproval because the absence of quotation marks "made it difficult to tell who was talking," necessitated rereading, or was a major contributing factor to Williams' "poor style." The following comments are entirely characteristic:

> I have only one complaint to make and that is the lack of inverted commas around direct speech. When I first read the story I was confused as to when a person started and finished his speech. Ordinary commas do not take inverted comma's place. (10-S/F)

> The first noticable feature of this story was the complete abandonment of quotation marks necessitating a longer time for reading. It reminded me distinctly of English exams in primary school in which one had to find mistakes in the passage and add inverted commas etc. I was sorely tempted to make the necessary additions, but I refrained from doing so. (10-A/M)

Similarly, unusual or novel aspects of the poem's language came under attack:

> The author uses a lot of metaphors and does not have a very good style as is illustrated by the very first line, where he contradicts himself by saying "slumps alertly." (10-A/M)

On the other hand, there were a number of convincing accounts of the recognition of the function of formal or structural elements, which usually occurred within the framework of discussions of the modernity of either the story or the poem: "The stream of consciousness is recognized by the omission of verbal punctuation, and this is highlighted in the conversations between the doctor and the parents." (12-S/M); "Most aspects of the poem suggest it is modern. The poet has completely abandoned rhyme, and has exercised freedom in the length of lines. The free verse is a perfect vehicle for the contemporary conflict he documents." (12-S/M)

A more detailed picture of the range of the elements of Perception discussed by the older, more able students emerges in the following extracts:

> The poem has an air of crackling dryness about it, signifying perhaps both a kind of tension and the dry dustiness of the city . . . Ralph Pomeroy has written a very 'now' poem. It is idle, yet tense. It is not idle as in 'a sunny stream, birds twittering etc.' There is a sense of waiting. They appear to be idling, yet they are tense, waiting for the other to make a move. As it turns out, the cop moves first, but his is a winning move. He has acknowledged the power he has, (10-S/F)

> "The Use of Force" is probably a modern piece of writing in its style as it does not use any rules concerning the punctuation of speech. This is annoying, but it does create the "thought-type" writing in the passage. In the writing of it, the author uses a slangy, colloquial style, but it is also cold and clinical, especially in the doctor's approach to the child and her parents, thus creating a sense of authenticity. It is a first-person narration, in the form of a confession. This is a flashback or reflection of a diphtheria case in the village -- "three dollars worth," thus is a stream of consciousness relating to the event. However, it is in a chronological order where he simply relates the story from his arrival at the house to his victory over the child's idiocy.
>
> It is not part of the author's life -- an autobiographical account of part of his life despite his use of the pronoun "I". In part it is the author speaking through a person as it does not appear to be personal, and is too clinical. This is probably because Williams is trying to create an atmosphere of coldness and sterility to show the callousness and the unrestrained actions of the doctor. (12-S/M)

> Pomeroy has written this poem in colloquial language using the usual poetic devices such as similes -- "supported by one leg like a leather stork," alliteration -- "green goggles," and onomatopoeia -- "splay and clench." This last quotation aids in setting the atmosphere of the poem. It is one of tension between the "tough guy" and the "cop":
>
> "His ease is fake. I can tell
> My ease is fake and he can tell."
>
> Pomeroy associates this tension with that of a bull fight, where one cannot back down. This comparison also helps in creating the atmosphere. There is no definite form for the verses. As it is a modern poem they vary in length. There are two very short stanzas, beginning with:
>
> "Everything holds me back/ . . ."
> and "I am becoming sunlight."
> in which the pace becomes very rapid as the tension tightens.
> (12-S/F)

What distinguishes these three passages is the relative complexity and sophistication with which each writer approaches the task of describing the interactive features of atmosphere, literary devices, point of view, structure, and tone. According to the NAEP criteria (Appendix D), most of the discussions of Perception undertaken by the students in this study would not achieve a ranking of "superior," since the general pattern involved a mere cataloguing of parts, at no point organized to support an overriding hypothesis about the work.

As Purves implicitly suggests, the clearest measure of worth in any formal analysis occurs with respect to statements coded as 240: Relation of Technique to Content. Responses in this subcategory answer the question: "What is the function of X?" According to Purves, the subcategory was chosen to accommodate "all those statements which relate the verbal, stylistic, or presentational means to the sense or effect of the work." (1968, 21) Such statements were occasionally found in the work of average students: "The words maintain an intensity of the feeling of being watched." (10-A/F) Superior students were consistently more specific in relating these stylistic or formal features to thematic concerns:

> Background description was not used in so short a story, nor would it have aided the effect of the story. Also the plot is necessary but only as an underskirt for the study of human behaviour. (10-S/F)
>
> Although I disliked the poem on the whole, there are still some of Pomeroy's techniques that protrude from each stanza, impossible to obliviate from the mind. His short four and three word phrases add to the quick, fast movements of the people involved. This creates the tense atmosphere that Pomeroy is constantly producing in his composition of words. (10-S/F)
>
> Some of the verbs have been chosen because they aid the sense of the line e.g.
> 'Splay and clench, itching to change something'
> The three verbs here, all with different vowel sounds, echo the action of the cop. I saw the cop's fingers moving even as I read the words. Also, in the line, 'quick as a craver' the quickness is emphasized by the plosive consonants and the short vowel sounds. (12-S/F)

A thorough search of individual protocols revealed an extremely limited range of references to literary devices beyond metaphor, simile, and imagery. Only one student built his response around a discussion of irony in "The Use of Force."

> The whole plot in the story "The Use of Force" revolves around the use of irony. The ironical situation, of course, was the role of a doctor in society to help sick people being totally unaccepted by someone who is dying. There is also irony involved another way. A doctors role is to help people, but in this story he actually makes a vicious assault on the girl and even hurts her when trying to heal her. (12-A/M)

Another student saw an allegorical function in the poem: "The author has used the situation as an allegory of modern day victimizations and their effect on the individual." (12-S/M) There were only one or two references to devices such as personification, hyperbole, or allusion, though such general omissions must be taken to represent limitations imposed by the literature itself, rather than a lack of knowledge or inclination on the students' part to centre discussion on the use and function of such devices.

On balance, the overall evidence of student writing both challenges and supports the finding of much prior research, that students (especially those at grades ten and twelve) evince little interest in the formal and technical aspects of literature. This equivocal position is necessary, since so many of the reactions to technical devices are colored by expressions of Engagement or Evaluation. As some of the quoted examples have indicated, most students tend to bring a set of personalistic or evaluative criteria to bear on their discussions of language, literary devices, tone, or structure. There were no completely objective accounts of either the story or poem, and the occasional detached, analytic portions of student writing were confined to the responses of superior students. The affective-perceptional or evaluative-perceptional thrust of most student responses is the necessary corollary of an already noted narrational-interpretive function. Just as retelling was rarely used for its own sake, so the other elements of Perception might assume even greater significance if the discreteness of Purves' basic fourfold classification were expanded to allow cross-categorical coding.

Interpretation Responses

The abstractive hierarchy implicit in the movement from character analysis (320), to mimetic interpretation (330), and finally to typological interpretation (340) represents a developmental pattern which directly mirrors three phases in the stage-specific period of formal operations -- analysis, generalizing, and theorizing. In spite of Purves' (1968) disclaimer that "there is no formal arrangement of the elements from lower to higher, from simple to complex, from basic to decorative," (4) the evidence of student writing supports the common-sense intuition that at the level of the subcategories of Interpretation the nature and range of interpretive responses closely recapitulates the general stages of cognitive growth.

The results of quantitative analysis have already indicated a dramatic increase in statements devoted to Interpretation of Content (320) throughout the grades. The proportion of total statements coded in this way more than doubled between grade eight and grade ten (8.77% and 19.61%), and fell away slightly to 16.07% in grade twelve. The substance of these inferences about the antecedent or constituent actions of the work, about the setting, or about the author were generally tied to increasingly sophisticated attempts to discuss questions of character motivation or relationships, all geared to inexorable hunts for the theme of the literary pieces. Certainly, both "The Use of Force" and "Corner" invited considerations of the set of motives behind the explicit conflict of the doctor and Mathilda, and the more subtle confrontation of the teenager and the motorcycle policeman.

One focal point for tracing qualitative differences in interpretations attempted by a large number of students at each grade level concerns the significance of the title of the poem:

> I can't see how the poem has anything to do with the title. (8-A/F)
>
> The title itself suggests a few things to me. It immediately makes me think of a joining of two roads -- a deserted alley and two walls meeting and forming a corner -- and a dead end. (8-S/F)
>
> The title suggests that the story or content took place on a corner, but probably more important than that it relates to the feeling the poet had at being watched or speculated so carefully -- cornered . . . The whole poem creates an atmosphere of being closed in with nowhere to turn for freedom and the words maintain an intensity of the feeling of being watched. Although in the content there is only one pair of eyes watching the poet, it appears to the reader that the whole creation is down upon him. (10-A/F)
>
> The title itself sets the scene and mood of the poem, and in some ways the poet himself. A corner, I imagine, to be something confined and limited, silent and alone, but open to view, an inevitable arena for the confrontation of the generations. (12-A/M)

These statements encapsulate a general linear tendency through the grades which runs the gamut from admissions of an inability to interpret elements in the literature, through rather literal interpretations, to generalizations which see symbolic significance in both the story and the poem.

The clearest evidence of this developmental process was found in the quantity and quality of responses coded as 330: Mimetic Interpretation and 340:Typological Interpretation, The total frequencies for each of these subcategories at each grade level, in response to both the short story and the poem, were as follows:

Grade 12:	(330)	130 statements
	(340)	95 statements
Grade 10:	(330)	63 statements
	(340)	24 statements
Grade 8:	(330)	13 statements
	(340)	5 statements

Examination of individual protocols revealed that both subcategories were used by only one student at grade eight, by twelve students at grade ten, and by twenty-five students at grade twelve. Only six of the grade-ten students using both, and sixteen of the grade-twelve students had been nominated as superior by their teachers.

In general, it is difficult to exemplify the range and quality of analytic or interpretive responses embodying mimesis or typology except in the context of complete protocols. Naturally, those essays exhibiting the most complex interpretations were bound by the rules of argument and evidence which makes illustration at the level of the response statement somewhat incomplete. Certainly, the symbolic conflicts in both the story and the poem produced only occasional responses at grade eight which saw the works as "imitative of the world . . . or as a distillation or abstraction from the world." (Purves, 1968, 8) The following isolated comments were restricted in occurrence and uniformly unelaborated:

> I felt that this piece of poetry conveyed the thoughts of a large majority of every day people who show a kind of fear of the police. The police who have great power probably make the people feel that the police are out to use this power on some unfortunate victim. (8-A/M)

> The youth and the cop are silent enemies for no reason, and they have a score to settle that has passed down through generations of youth. (8-S/F)

> This theme is something which is not overworked or written about too frequently, in fact it is mostly neglected. But the story extends beyond the doctor, the parents, and the child. It deals with the human victim, and the animal brought out in us in our desperateness, even though our deeper senses know that to resist is hopeless. (8-S/F)

The last example is entirely atypical, since it was the poem rather than the story which prompted generalizations amongst the grade eights.

To provide evidence of characteristic changes in the sophistication and quality of interpretive responses as they occur between grades ten and twelve it is necessary to consider examples such as those below:

> Two points of view from this excerpt can be considered. One is the social aspect and also the human aspect.
>
> The event is an example of a particular type of social problem, that of people in a poor environment where a doctor is foreign and not completely trusted. It clearly displays the class difference which exists in the world. The doctor usually comes from a high class and so there is obvious tension when he encounters people of a lower class.
>
> The human element concerns the extent to which one should use force to gain something which is very necessary. In the excerpt, the doctor must be violent in order to ascertain whether the child has diphtheria. Although the child is terrified of him and will hate him for using force, he must do it.
>
> Another aspect is the amount of control one can keep over one's emotions. This is represented by the doctor allowing his concern for the girl to be overpower by anger.
>
> Therefore, a number of deeper levels of meaning are contained within the story. (10-S/M)

> In his slice of life, short story, "The Use of Force," William Carlos Williams describes the rugged conflict between a strong-minded young girl and an equally stubborn doctor. This confrontation is important, for it forms the basis, on which symbolic characterizations are established. These types of evaluation are significant, for the battle royal engaged upon, reflects the whole situation of the generation gap. The young rebel who is blooming, even in a repressive and stifling environment, surrounded by a lower middle class family who constantly change their opinion, represents the new breed of human being, hell bent on radical restructuring of society, at any cost. The whole question of whether or not force can be, or should be used in making people conform, such as in the example of the throat examination of Mathilda Olsen, is debated

by Williams, in the form of the determination of the doctor, and his apprehensiveness in trying to break the spirit of this wild beauty. Williams microscopically examines the unamed young doctor's thoughts on the matter, through the use of the omniscient author, this technique proves to be invaluable, for as the conflict progresses, so too can mood and feeling be re-examined.

The lack of understanding which exists between people of different generations is reflected by William Carlos Williams in the form of a truly hostile, patient doctor relationship, which contains a partner from opposing viewpoints and ages. Even though it is just a simple domestic situation, Mathilda's concerted effort to deflect the path of her doctor is not simply the screaming tantrum of an immature brat. Instead, the inability of the young, and in particular, the maturing, developing teenager to communicate with parents, and indeed authoritarian ruling class morals and values in general, is expressed. Her rebelliousness is more of a plea for help, than a genuine hatred of her doctor, but the medical officer, reacts in true fashion, by justifying his violent actions, with the words "the damned little brat must be protected against her own idiocy." This type of care, or really lack of real consciousness on the matter is a direct result of a failure to concede, on both sides, that the other side has the ability to reason for themselves. However a special loving respect can quite easily develop from a situation such as Williams depicts.

"Oh yeah? I had to smile to myself. After all, I had already fallen in love with the savage brat, the parents were contemptible to me. In the ensuing struggle they grew more and more abject, crushed, exhausted while she surely rose to magnificent heights of insane fury." Rather than respecting from a safe distance, Williams suggests that it is simply, human nature, which causes people to jump into an argument feet first. Thus, the self respect and pride of your opponent is further destroyed while humiliation and sorrow are all that is left. After the hair and skin has stopped flying, neither side, in a battle of such magnitude and gusto, as symbolically described by Williams, will really have changed, or conceded a single point. Only a new, more vicious revenging opponent will arise out of the dust. The problem therefore is compounded, and great heights of confrontation reached. The answer lies hidden, deep in the secret longings of your combatant, as the unknown unamed doctor realizes, to expose this mystery is the only suitable answer. Fail to do this, and the battle compounds, logarithmically.

"Now truly she was furious. She had been on the defensive before but now she attacked. Tried to get off her father's lap and fly at me while tears of defeat blinded her eyes." (12-S/M)

As intimated earlier, the application of fairly traditional, rhetorical criteria is unavoidable in judging matters of interpretive adequacy. What marks the writing of the grade-twelve student is attention to factors such as the multi-faceted development of a main idea, a varied range of supporting details embedded both in the writer's experience and the evidence of the text, the flavor and individuality of a discernible style, and a simply more mature vocabulary. These are the very factors, it will be remembered, which are most valued by teachers, and therefore provide the clearest circumstantial evidence of the success of an instructional process.

Evaluation Responses

The experience of the coding process unearthed problems with the status of Evaluation as a discrete category which were to a lesser degree evident in dealing with responses coded as Engagement, Perception, or Interpretation. On the one hand, there was ample support for the belief, already mooted by Cooper (1969) and Applebee (1973), that the process of evaluation was qualitatively different from the identifying, perceiving, and interpreting stances of the other major categories. As Purves (1968) admits, the basis of Evaluation is tautological in that its constituent subcategories -- Affective Evaluation, Evaluation of Method, and Evaluation of Author's Vision - bear a one-to-one relationship with Engagement, Perception, and Interpretation. It should be remembered, as well, that in the absence of structured directions which marked the use of the free response, the choice of applying personal, rhetorical, or aesthetic criteria as grounds on which to judge the adequacy of a reader's experience of the work, or of qualities in the work itself, was privately exercised by each student.

Again, there is an implicit hierarchy in the movement from general evaluation (400), to methodological evaluation (420), and finally to evaluation of vision (430) which recapitulates the gross outlines of stages of emotional and cognitive growth. Yet objective coding has indicated that grade-eight students make more statements devoted to evaluation of the author's craft than do grade-twelve students. It is evident, therefore, that qualitative distinctions within the subcategories of Evaluation will point the direction of developmental patterns rather more clearly than the evidence of quantitative occurrence.

The typical grade-eight paper began with a short evaluative statement indicating whether or not the reader liked the literature -- "This poem is very good"; "I like this story"; "The story of the poem is not really interesting, but it might just be because I am not a fan for poetry"; "I think this story is quite good because it portrayed people in their true sense." Just as typically the paper ended with a summary judgment occasionally drawing on criteria developed in the body of the paper, but more often introducing idiosyncratic criteria: "I liked this poem which is funny because I detest poetry"; "On the whole I thought the story was pretty good, better than what we usually read in school"; "I think it's a good poem but really unusually written"; "Although it is a boring poem it describes things fairly well."

At the level of more specific evaluations of the author's technique the younger students responded with statements of the order: "The characters were really well described. I like the way the young girl's eyes were described, and how the author said she was quiet and unusually attractive with her blond hair." (8-S/F) Even at grade ten, the criteria employed to support evaluative statements were tied to private concepts of realism, reader identification, or the writer's use of "good similes." By this stage there were emergent indications of an ability to relate concepts of effectiveness to a more formal set of criteria: "The introduction is very weak, and the first few lines refer to over two different people, each one described by the use of dangling pronouns." (10-A/F); "The story is told by the doctor which makes it quite effective, though if it were told by the child or even the mother or father it would affect the reader equally as it does in its present form." (10-S/F)

In what could be taken as evidence of developing standards of taste, more than a few students at grades ten and twelve provided lengthy evaluations of the form and content of the literature. On one level the criteria remained intensely personal:

> As I have been instructed to make this paper as honest as possible, I shall be frank and say that I do not like this poem at all. Most poetry of this type ('hip' nature) does not appeal to me. I know that you would probably expect most teenagers to appreciate it as it is supposed to be written in our language, supposed to be with the times which it is really, but to me somehow, there is something lacking, a poetic feeling not present which makes me lose interest. I enjoy reading poetic words. These sound nice, they make me feel good. (10-A/F)

An older student, after dutifully admitting that the poem contained "some figurative language, the usual forms of imagery in poetry," went on to complain:

> However, all these techniques have not the power of imagination or originality which can be found in poets like Keats or John Shaw Nielson who employ rich, sensuous imagery. These poets may not have written on the same themes -- the friction between law and authority, certainly not on contemporary issues, but this poem is rather clicheique. (12-S/F)

Nor were these negative evaluations confined to the poem:

> I believe the story could have been much better. The dialogue is staccato; it's choppy; it doesn't flow. The lines are strictly comic book like something out of "General Hospital." The author slaughters his own feeble attempts at colloquialism as a stylistic device. The mother and father speak well most of the time. On occasion they say "ain't," "her throat don't hurt her" or "We tho't you'd better take a look." From this, the family shows structure and accent traits belonging to either a backwoods Tenessee farmer or a Cockney flower girl. At times the mother even sounds Jewish! How does one decide? (12-S/M)

The task of isolating developmental trends within the corpus of evaluative statements was therefore compounded by the subsumptive, superordinate nature of the construct itself. Since the grade-eight students listed as many causes for liking or not liking formal or thematic issues within the story or the poem as did grade twelves, the most reliable evidence of growth within this response mode related to the ability of older students to list, with some elaboration and depth, a greater range of subjective or objective criteria which accounted for the judgmental stance they adopted.

Effects of Audience and Context

The attempts to document the effects of a sense of audience on student writing, and the perception of response patterns relevant to an informal context were approached in two ways. The simple expedient of instructing students to "imagine that [they were] writing as much for other members of the class as for a teacher" demanded a "willing suspension of disbelief" which produced very few indications of concerns for an audience other than the teacher. Especially at grades ten and twelve the quality of student writing was routinized and predictable, inevitably evidencing the remembered dicta of literature lessons. On the other hand, the results of the Response Preference Questionnaire, which asked students to list those questions considered most and least important when literature was encountered in an out-of-school setting, provided several challenges to the patterns deriving from the actual writing samples of the main study.

Results of the follow-up questionnaire will be presented first, since they establish the set of expectations which prompted the original desire to specify an audience including the peer group as well as the teacher. As Table 26 indicates, the consistency of commitment to Engagement responses, at all three grade levels, challenges one of the basic findings of the quantitative and qualitative discussions of written responses to "The Use of Force" and "Corner". At grades eight, ten, and twelve the Engagement question, "What emotions does the literature arouse in me?" (Subcategory 120), is ranked above all others. In addition, the related Engagement questions represented by Subcategories 100 and 130, "How did I feel after reading the literature?" and, "Are any of the characters, events, etc. in the literature like those I know or have experienced?", while ranked progressively lower through grades eight, ten, and twelve, displace some of the perceptional, interpretive, and evaluative concerns which the order of preferences for the school-based study of poems and short stories divulged. (See below pp.162-166)

Although the subcategories of Interpretation appear only once in the list of rejected questions, the nature and range of preferred subcategories suggests only a slight realignment of a growing commitment to interpretive matters. At all three grade levels the desire to extract meaning, albeit on a general level, persists in the informal context. Interesting changes of emphasis emerge at grades ten and twelve, with the grade tens betraying a concern with the didactic thrust

TABLE 26

PREFERRED AND REJECTED SUBCATEGORIES FOR LITERATURE ENCOUNTERED IN AN OUT-OF-SCHOOL SETTING: RANK ORDERS AT GRADES EIGHT, TEN, AND TWELVE

	RANK ORDER OF PREFERRED SUBCATEGORIES		
	GRADE 8	GRADE 10	GRADE 12
(1)	120	120	120
(2)	100	260	230
(3)	400	100	260
(4)	300	230	100
(5)	260	400	410
(6)	230	410	210
(7)	200	430	300
(8)	130	130	340
(9)	410	300	220
(10)	270	350	130

	RANK ORDER OF REJECTED SUBCATEGORIES		
	GRADE 8	GRADE 10	GRADE 12
(1)	280	280	280
(2)	430	110	110
(3)	220	220	270
(4)	110	240	430
(5)	210	210	320

of the literature, and the grade twelves committing themselves rather more to the wider, typological issues raised in the literature.

The conjunction of preferred and rejected questions within the category of Perception reveal patterns of potential interest. Predictably, again, students at all ages are concerned with the content and setting (Subcategory 230) of literature read outside the school context. Questions of atmosphere, mood, and point of view also appear to be of universal importance. Perhaps teachers would regard with mixed feelings the relative importance which students attach to matters of language, literary devices, and contextual classification (Subcategories 210, 220, and 280) in out-of-school discussions at each grade level. Specifically, all three concerns are clearly rejected by students at grade eight and grade ten, and almost as clearly sanctioned by students at grade twelve. The notable exception concerns the historical background of the literature and other contextual issues, which grade-twelve students, like those at grades eight and ten, regard as least relevant to their informal reading pursuits.

With regard to Evaluation, the grade-ten students, by including Subcategories 400, 410, and 430 in their list of important questions, create an apparently anomalous pattern of preference. At grades eight and twelve, the extent to which the literature is successful in involving the reader (Subcategory 410) is an important out-of-school consideration, and the younger students continue to ascribe significance to questions of general evaluation. It is the approved inclusion of Subcategory 430 by the grade tens which disrupts what appeared as an inevitable pairing of this evaluation question with its Engagement corollary: "Is this a proper subject for literature in general?" (Subcategory 110)

It seems clear, then, that if the subjects had responded to the invitation to write for the peer group, a range of personal reactions would have persisted throughout all grades to a far greater degree than was, in fact, the case. Especially at grade twelve, most students interpreted the task of writing about literature as formulaic discourse, limited by certain learned rules of use. The following schematic response clearly reflects at least one pattern of teacher expectation:

Title: The use of force

Setting
Time: The story could have taken place during any year, month

or day. Could have occurred during morning, noon or night.

Place: Took place in the familys kitchen

Characters

Mother: an apologetic woman, clean, concerned for her child's welfare.

Father: Big man also concerned for his daughter health. He loved her deeply and did not wish any pain to be inflicted upon his child.

Mathilda: Daughter of this couple. Sick child who had no expression whatever on her face. Appeared to be a strong young thing with beautiful blonde hair. Stubborn, defensive of her stand.

Dr. Olsen: Concerned for Mathilda's health. Slow to temper but soon became extremely frustrated with the girl.

Plot: Man against Man - Dr. Olsen was in conflict with Mathilda. Dr. Olsen was the victor and Mathilda was defeated.

Literary Technique

The story was told from the limited omnicient point of view. Also uses the literary techniques of a short story rather well. Extremely short extensive use of Dialogue.

Theme:

Relevancy - This story is relevant in that often people refuse to expose unpleasant circumstances which could cause other people to worry or feel low. Mathilda didn't wish her parents to know she was deathly ill because she knew the feelings she would inflict on her parents. Many people in the past as well as the future have constantly been on the defensive to protect theirs and others security.

Integration - This story must somehow affect the reader. Often the defensive side of an argument is perhaps the safest. There, other people can't reach out to you or help you. Whereas others choose the offensive side of a conflict. Either way both are subject to defeat. (12-A/F)

More disturbing in its implication of total dependence on teacher-sanctioned procedures is the following complete protocol written in response to the poem: "This poem I do not understand, I learned something about them last year but I cannot apply what little knowledge or memory I have to it." (10-A/M)

A small number of students, at all three grade levels, appeared to interpret the direction to write "for other members of the class" as involving a relaxation of certain linguistic or substantive rule of decorum:

> This is just some old poem about some kid and a cop. Certain areas don't make sense like "slumped alertly" how can you be both things at the same time. It's just a weird poem. The poem doesn't exactly turn me on and is written in the 60's as you can tell with the 'talk' of the time e.g. "Prince of Coolness, King of Fear." How many people do you know that talk like that? Besides I'm not much of a poetry fiend that reads every poem ever written. You should be more explicit in your directions! (10-A/M)
>
> The poem flows smoothly without all that ryming crap you usually have to put up with. (10-A/F)
>
> I thought the poem was really weird and I didn't really understand it at first. So tell Ralphy to rewrite it! (8-A/M)
>
> When I read a poem, I expect to be moved by it in some way. Something usually happens: either my strong emotions of hate emerge, or as a contrast, I drift off into a lazy, day-dream world of content. Yet, as I read Pomeroy's poem Corner, I cannot get into it. My first impression is one of "Who the hell wrote this?", or "Who the hell would write something like this?" The poem gives the impressions of some Joe Stud having it out with a cop, yet the grammer in the poem just doesn't fit that pattern. The author tries to make the poem realistic, but sometimes fails at the attempt. I get the feeling that Pomeroy never even observed a situation like that, much less dwelt in one. Over all, I was sorry I read the poem, and my emotions are aroused only in the direction of the author. I've got two words for him, and it ain't good morning. (12-A/M)

These immature departures from the objective, transactional analysis of most of the responses were clearly unconvincing. The colloquialisms, inanities, or profanities, either real or implied, lend support to Rosen's (1973) contention of an inevitable confusion for the student-writer when the teacher's demands as sole audience are deliberately withheld.

The only other indication of the effects of an audience specification occurred when students made occasional comments of the order: "I didn't really enjoy the poem very much. I do feel that some of the other class members may have enjoyed it though." "I thought this poem was interesting, but I don't think I would recommend it to anyone else in my class." Such literal interpretations of the invitation to invite consideration of the peer group as audience were generally subordinated to the stronger, more comfortable tradition of writing for an audience which immediately transformed the investigator into surrogate teacher. As one twelfth grader put it: "Well now, sir, I suppose you're looking at this short item of prose before your knowledgable eyes and wonder "What basically is the theme you're so firm in putting forward?'"

Results of Teacher Questionnaire

As a follow-up to the concerns of the main study the eight participating teachers provided brief written answers to eight questions phrased to obtain an overview of the logistics of literature instruction; global and specific objectives for teaching the short story and poetry; criteria used for assessing written essays, and the kinds of teacher responses made on these essays; differentiated teaching strategies which might be used in teaching the selected short story and the selected poem at each of the three grade levels; and the teachers' private characterizations of the perceptive adolescent reader. The eight questions will be restated, together with summary interpretations and illustrative quotations where these seem appropriate. Taken together, the teachers' answers provide strong inferential support for the consistency of quantitative and qualitative changes in the patterns of response which have been discussed thus far.

(1) What proportion of time do you spend in literary study? For Grade 8? Grade 10? Grade 12?

At least two teachers found the term "literary study" troublesome. In the words of one of them:

> It depends what you mean by literary study -- if you mean time spent reading, writing, listening, speaking, using literary materials as a resource or stimulus -- obviously most of the time.

Across the three grade levels, however, the time spent ranged from 30% to 90%. The means for the eight teachers at each grade level were as follows: Grade 8 (40%); Grade 10 (50%); and Grade 12 (65%).

(2) How many stories/poems would you have presented in the last year. To Grade 8? Grade 10? Grade 12?

As might be expected, three teachers experienced some difficulty in remembering what they, or their students, had done. Distinctions were again drawn between examples of the two literary forms which were employed for "close analysis," and materials used for "general illustration of a theme," or for "pure enjoyment." For the five teachers who provided actual numbers for each genre, the following means resulted: Grade 8 -- 15 stories and 30 poems; Grade 10 -- 12 stories and 35 poems; Grade 12 -- 15 stories and 45 poems. Predictably, then, the balance of instruction at each grade level favored the poem over the short story.

(3) What do you consider to be the most important objectives in teaching the short story? Are there overall objectives which would accommodate all grade levels, and more specific objectives relevant to each of Grades 8, 10, and 12?

(4) What do you consider to be the most important objectives in teaching poetry? Again, are there overall objectives which would accommodate all grade levels, and more specific objectives relevant to each of Grade 8, 10, and 12?

These questions must be taken together, since most teachers were reluctant to specify objectives at the general level which differentiated approaches to the separate genres. Most notably lacking was any common aim which encompassed such concerns as the potential for emotional growth, the development of imagination, the opportunity to share ideas, or the provision of contexts for a creative response. One account, which did acknowledge the need for balance, ran as follows:

> I consider that the teaching of stories and poetry (and I define teaching here in the formal sense where the class is introduced to the work in a structured way) takes place in a context where students are exposed to a great deal of literature in informal situations. I move always in formal teaching towards these ends: (a) an understanding of the work in general; (b) an understanding of key situations in the work; (c) an understanding of the way the writer achieves his effects in general and specific ways; (d) a 'creative' writing activity where the student may use ideas or techniques gained from the poem/story if he wants to.
>
> I would like to stress that a great deal of poetry and stories are presented by students and myself in an informal way for enjoyment only. There, the response is basically oral -- speaking verse, enjoying rhythm, dramatizing a story etc. I consider these activities based on enjoyment equally as important as structured study, though I give them more emphasis (about 60%) in the Junior school than I do in the Senior school (30-40%).

The more common pattern equated objectives with arbitrary lists of structural, technical, or interpretive features which were judged appropriate to each of the three grade levels. Some of these approaches, as applied to the short story, were:

Grade 8: My main aim would be to assist the students to enjoy it as a piece of good narrative. I would look at things like climax, conflict, humor, development of plot -- but I would be principally interested in helping them to see it as a good and enjoyable yarn.

You might try a story with a bit of action and good, strong characters.

To understand the plot, and the difficulties of producing a satisfactory climax in a short story as compared to a novel.

Grade 10: Main interest is in characterization -- including the use of language in description and use of dialogue.

More concentration on unity of effect, with special emphasis on characterization and setting.

These students, after a study of the structural elements, should be able to tell a good story from one that is purely escapist.

Grade 12: I would widen the study further -- would look at where the story and its author fit into the history of literature -- the political and philosophical significance of the story, and a distinct emphasis on style.

More emphasis on matters of theme, mood, and stylistic and language qualities.

As pure appreciation studies, in which the students learn to cite evidence, and show competence in reading critically in the realm of aesthetics.

The implied sequence for the study of poetry derives even more clearly from an appropriation of types and techniques applied to particular grade levels. Some of the more general objectives which teachers acknowledged were: "to foster a love of poetry, which will lead to reading beyond the poems set for prescribed study"; "to nurture the subjective, personal response"; and "to promote a desire and willingness for all students to write their own poetry." However, as the following account indicates, there was a general change of focus through grades eight, ten, and twelve from a wide and general exposure to poems at the lower level, to increasingly complex investigations of poetics and the writings of selected poets:

> Grade eights should be encouraged to read and enjoy as many poems as possible -- all sorts of poems -- limericks, ballads, contemporary lyrics, descriptive and narrative poems, even some satirical poems. At grade ten, the main aim would still be to read as widely as possible, and with enjoyment. Here I would introduce a few basic terms like rhyme, rhythm, the common figures of speech and different types and forms -- sonnet, ballad, etc. By grade twelve I would expect them to be able to recognize most techniques and forms, but more importantly to acknowledge the philosophy of the poets studied, to come to grips with the prophetic, visionary quality of great poets.

In general, then, the objectives which informed the teaching of both short stories and poems appear closely related to the adoption of a variety of approaches, uniformly, yet somewhat arbitrarily applied across different grade levels. The continuum implies a response-centred approach at grade eight, with the literature usually occurring in the framework of a thematic organization, perhaps without the need for compulsory written responses. By grades ten and twelve, generic or historical approaches to the study of literature are inevitably tied to the practices of close textual analysis or practical criticism.

(5) How do you determine the mark given to students' written responses to literature?

Since the study has already established that these same teachers used the rhetoric of the written response as the primary criterion by which the superior students were selected, it is hardly surprising that this question produced little more than sets of more or less elaborated criteria for the scoring of expository essays. These criteria, in general order of importance involved: the maturity and originality of ideas; the accuracy of the information presented; the absence of regurgitated comments; a compelling and individual style; and varying degrees of sheer mechanical "correctness."

An important matter of local interest, which most teachers acknowledged as the major constraint under which assessment procedures operated, was a norm-referenced system of Moderation which has recently replaced the external examination. As one teacher explained the process: "Given the Queensland comparability system, I try to indicate for my own purposes an order of rank, all within the aims of the syllabus. 'Marks' therefore become a shorthand for my own records. I do not place numerical marks on students' work unless I am marking another class's work." Similarly disturbing in the implications of externally imposed limits placed upon assessment was the following: "Some of the more experimental, creative activities I engage in are never taken to Moderation meetings, since most of the other teachers would not accept them."

(6) What kinds of comments do you make on students' written responses which are submitted to you?

Generally, teachers distinguished between the supportive comments made on more informal responses, and the somewhat more critical responses made to essays submitted for formal assessment. The following replies are entirely typical:

> If the responses deal with literature questions, I seldom make comments on grammar, spelling etc. unless very poor. I would be more concerned with (1) opinions unsubstantiated (2) illogical argument (3) insincerity of response (4) self-conscious use of quotations (5) simple copying from references (6) irrelevant material (7) failure to answer question.
>
> Some of the following: "Does not answer the question"; "Only telling the story"; "No discussion of themes or devices"; "Expression lacks clarity"; "Expression lacks accuracy"; "Arguments and value judgments unoriginal."

> Lengthy. I attempt to appreciate the response in terms of the purpose and sense of the question set. I try to find something to praise, then I attempt to make a constructive criticism. Each error is marked (if the work is an assignment) so that the students can enter mistakes in a personal dossier. I attempt at all times to creat a working partnership, cooperation between student and myself.
>
> I often take up arms against a point of view with which I disagree. I believe strongly in supportive marking and have at times marginally over-rated students' work, because of the good psychological effect it has. I also give a grading of some kind, e.g. A-E, since students seem conditioned to expect and want this sort of thing.
>
> (7) How would you approach teaching "The Use of Force" and "Corner" at Grades 8, 10, and 12?

Of most immediate interest were sets of unsolicited statements indicating whether the teachers would, in fact, teach the story and poem at each of the three grade levels. Where such judgments were made there was certainly no unanimity. For example, two teachers felt that "The Use of Force" would be inappropriate for grade eights ("I am not sure many grade eights would appreciate the intention of the story."), while two teachers saw the story as "perhaps too obvious for grade twelves." On the other hand, only one teacher expressed reservations about "Corner": "The poem is rather hard for all except about 5% of Grade 8 students."

The most notable differences across grade levels concerned the provision of activity-centred procedures at grades eight and ten, which were replaced by a central concern for analysis at grade twelve. Four teachers provided rather detailed accounts of the possibilities of mime, translation into a radio play, the development of scripted dramas embodying similar confrontations (father-son, teacher-student, picture proprietor-customer), and the production of collages for these thematically similar selections. As a parallel to these procedures, teachers emphasized an expectation of increasingly more mature responses with grades ten and twelve -- "a discussion of language, imagery, theme, and conflict with a more literary bias." Especially at grade twelve, according to one teacher, "students should be able to explain why something like 'Corner,' so apparently prosaic at first, is in fact poetic." Above all, in the words of another teacher, "students at grades ten and twelve would be expected to provide pretty complex accounts of the social and psychological dimensions of theme in both the story and the poem."

(8) What are your most perceptive readers of literature like?

A considerable variety of answers resulted from this question, occasioning both contradictory and revealing implications:

> They listen to the teacher, and are often able to argue with him. They often have very good verbal expression, but when it comes to writing they are occasionally obscure and clumsy.
>
> More often than not introspective and withdrawn, but with superior verbal ability.
>
> Those students who can submerge themselves in the imaginary world of the art form, and yet stand back from it to look interpretively and critically at its impact. This ability to distance oneself from the art form, and yet to enjoy the immediacy and personal involvement it offers, seems to promote perceptiveness.
>
> Better and keener than I.
>
> They can extract meaning and tone without the need for teacher prompting.
>
> He seems to inhabit a world of experiences, through wide reading, which sets him apart from common mortals.
>
> Certainly they are avid readers, with a spark of rebelliousness. They can frighten you with their intensity, yet they write well.
>
> Above all they are honest. Apparently divergent thinkers -- not so successful in other subjects, but often interested in the other arts like dancing, music and photography.

Taken collectively, these answers provide a composite picture of the perceptive (or perhaps superior) reader. Yet there is still the residual suggestion that the ultimate criterion by which the student will be judged is that he "writes well."

Summary

This chapter has concerned itself with a qualitative analysis of student protocols and a search for indices of a sense of audience evident in student writing. It also reported the results of a follow-up questionnaire distributed to teachers.

Although problems were encountered with the discreteness of Purves' categories of Engagement, Perception, Interpretation, and Evaluation it was possible to unearth developmentally relevant patterns of response statements within each of the major categories. Complete protocols, or combinations of response statements, were quoted and analyzed to reveal: (1) a general movement from egocentrism to detachment within the Engagement category, with both the younger and average students responding with the greatest self-involvement; (2) little evidence of the purely objective or analytic response, which may have resulted from the idiosyncratic qualities of the selected literature; (3) a definite hierarchy in the subcategories of interpretation of content, mimetic interpretation, and typological interpretation, with only the superior grade-twelve students using all three approaches; (4) a definite distinction between younger, less able students and older, more able students on a continuum of interpretive inadequacy-interpretive substance. The superordinate nature of Evaluation recapitulated these movements in the other categories, with the added evidence of an ability on the part of the grade-twelve students to employ a greater range of subjective and objective criteria to account for their judgmental statements.

On the one hand, the Response Preference Questionnaire indicated that, in informal contexts, students at all grade levels expect to provide a wide range of personal statements. However, there was little evidence in the protocols, either in content or language mode, of the students' addressing any audience other than the investigator as surrogate teacher. Only the occasional breach of rules of linguistic decorum gave any indication that students accepted the invitation to write for an audience including the peer group as well as the teacher.

The results of the teacher questionnaire provided strong inferential support for the quantitative and qualitative patterns of response detailed in this and the previous chapter. While most teachers adopted a flexible, response-oriented approach to the teaching of literature in grade eight, progressively more structured approaches were employed at grades ten and twelve. At the higher grade levels, teachers were required to submit examples of student work at local Moderation meetings. Most teachers perceived a requirement to limit the nature of these samples to standard exercises of a traditional, literary critical nature.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Summary of the Study

This study involved a quantitative and qualitative examination of two hundred and forty protocols written in response to a selected short story and a selected poem by equal groups of grade-eight, grade-ten, and grade-twelve students drawn from four secondary schools in Townsville, Queensland, Australia. The free response essays were coded according to the system of categories and subcategories of response developed in Purves and Rippere's (1968) Elements of Writing about a Literary Work in order to determine the extent of differences in: (1) the response patterns of the total numbers of students to the combined pieces of literature; (2) the response patterns of the total numbers of students, and of students distinguished by grade level, to the story and poem taken separately; (3) the response patterns of the total numbers of students, and of student distinguished by grade level, to the story as compared with the poem; (4) the response patterns of male and female students to the story and poem combined, or to the story and poem taken separately and (5) the response patterns of groups of superior and average students (so nominated by their teachers) to the story and poem combined, or to the story and poem taken separately.

To extend the data available for discussion beyond that provided in the written responses to a single short story and a single poem, the subjects also completed a Response Preference Questionnaire. The questionnaire elicited additional information on students' preferred (or expected) modes of response to short stories in general, or to poems in general as each genre might be encountered in a school setting. Additionally, the students were asked to rank a series of questions on the basis of approval or rejection when any form of literature was encountered in an informal setting. This procedure, coupled with the instructions for writing in which students were asked to address their responses as much to the peer group as to the teacher, was intended to gauge the effect of context and a sense of audience on student responses.

The resulting patterns of content analysis, especially in relation to the selected short story, "The Use of Force," enabled cross-cultural comparisons to be drawn between the response preferences for the study's Australian sample and the patterns unearthed for American, English, and New Zealand students in the investigations by Purves (1968) and Purves, Foshay, and Hansson (1973) which had employed the same story. In addition, the overall response patterns were set against the contradictory results from a number of other studies whose overriding purpose had been to build up a cross-sectional picture of response based on Purves' categories and subcategories.

A subjective analysis of individual protocols was also employed in order to assess the quality of developmental, age-relevant patterns of response. Matters of parallel interest in this qualitative analysis were: the distinguishing features in the responses of students labelled superior or average by their teachers, the overall analytic power of the Purves and Rippere system, and indices of a sense of audience evident in student writing.

Finally, the eight teachers who provided the study's sample population completed a questionnaire which sought information on the time spent on literary study at each of the three grade levels, on general objectives for teaching the short story and poetry, and specific teaching approaches which they might use with the selected short story and poem, on procedures employed in evaluating the literary response, and on their private characterizations of the perceptive adolescent reader.

Conclusions

The following conclusions relevant to this study of responses made to a short story and a poem have been reached on the basis of the analysis of data presented in Chapters Four and Five:

1. The preferred mode of response used by all students to both pieces of literature is Perception. Also, when the combined responses to the selected short story and the selected poem are considered, the students as a whole exhibit a heavy inclination to respond with statements of their engagement with, and their perception and interpretation of the content of the literature.

2. At grade eight the preferred mode of response is clearly Perception, but by grades ten and twelve a virtually identical preference for Perception and Interpretation has emerged. On the other hand, the older students are less prone both to evaluate and provide

expressions of their personal responses, than are their younger counterparts.

3. Differences in the responses of students by grade level to the short story and the poem taken separately are consistently significant in two categories of response. Both the short story and the poem produce highly significant decreases in Engagement responses between grades eight and twelve, and a less significant decrease between grades ten and twelve. This movement is paralleled by highly significant increases in Interpretation responses between grades eight and ten, and between grades eight and twelve.

4. When the patterns of response to the selected short story are compared directly with those for the selected poem, very few significant differences emerge. The poem does, however, prompt far fewer retellings than the story, and creates predictable problems at the level of comprehending the language of poetic narrative. Also, the responses of the grade-twelve students to matters of language, literary devices, and the relation of technique to content with respect to the poem, double the combined responses of the grade-eight and grade-ten students in each of these areas of concern. Finally, the poem produces a notable, though non-significant, increase in Interpretation responses from the two groups of younger students.

5. In spite of the overall consistency of written responses to the selected short story and the selected poem, the results of the response preference questionnaire suggest distinct patterns of expectation and rejection related both to grade levels and genres when short stories and poem are encountered in a school setting. For short stories,

the grade-eight and grade-ten students expect to focus preeminently on the associated perceptional matters of content and structure, while the grade-ten and grade-twelve students consistently rank literary devices and language as the most important aspects in the study of poems. Other observations which reinforce or extend the results of analysis of written responses to the single story and poem include the following:

(a) in grades eight and ten students expect to bring their personal reactions to bear on both short stories and poems, while such concerns are virtually excluded from the patterns of expectation for grade twelve students;

(b) tenth graders are far less concerned with matters of general evaluation or the more specific evaluations of the author's techniques than are either eighth graders or twelfth graders;

(c) all students join in according very little importance to the propriety or significance of the subject or topic of both literary forms.

On the other hand, in an informal context, even the oldest students attach great importance to matters of personal involvement. Similarly, when any form of literature is encountered in an out-of-school context students of all ages are quite interested in questions of atmosphere, mood, and point of view. The least valued questions in this setting are concerned with the historical background of the literature, contextual issues, and evaluation of the author's vision.

6. Differences in response to either the short story or the poem by sex are virtually non-existent.

7. A number of important differences occur in the responses of superior and average students to the story and poem combined, and to the story and poem taken separately. Overall, the superior student, in the judgment of teachers involved in this study, and on the evidence

of the protocols, consistently avoids conjectural statements, identification, or the relation of features in literature to those in his own life. In addition, especially at grade twelve, he evinces a marked interest in evaluating the formal and rhetorical elements of a literary work. Above these general dispositions, the superior student provides more perceptional and interpretive statements for the poem as opposed to the short story.

8. When the response patterns of the Australian subjects in this study are compared with those of the American, English, and New Zealand samples in the studies by Purves (1968) and Purves, Foshay, and Hansson (1973) which employed the same short story, it is possible to note certain cross-cultural differences and similarities. Among the more important conclusions are the following:

(a) students from all four countries share a lack of interest in specific technical questions (literary devices, relation of technique to content, literary classification, and contextual classification) as they relate to "The Use of Force";

(b) in general the Australian students exhibit a set of response preferences closest to those of the American sample in the IEA study, especially in contrast to the English and New Zealand students' greater predilection for Evaluation; and

(c) the older Australian students are clearly differentiated from students of the same age in Purves' (1968) study in their decreased attention to Engagement and their preference for Interpretation.

The study also suggests that, where the reported findings conflict with those from other cross-sectional studies, the contradictory patterns of response preferences are a result of differences in the combined stimuli used to elicit response; differences in the task setting, or the actual instructions given prior to the collection of protocols; cultural and grade level differences in the sampled populations; and problems endemic in the Purves system itself, especially the superordinate nature of the Evaluation category.

9. Despite Purves' caution that his categories, subcategories, and elements are non-taxonomic, qualitative and developmentally instructive distinctions can be made within the Engagement and Interpretation modes. On continua such as egocentrism-detachment, dogmatism-tentativeness, and interpretive inadequacy-interpretive substance, student writing can be distinguished by grade and ability levels. The most clearly differentiated hierarchy relates to the movement through interpretation of content, mimetic interpretation, and typological interpretation. On the other hand, the superordinate nature of Evaluation makes the tracing of developmental stages within this category entirely dependent on related shifts within the engaged, perceptional, and interpretive modes.

10. The provision of an audience including the peer group as well as the teacher produces very few notable features in the content or language mode of students' written responses to literature. Most students ignore the invitation to extend their responses beyond the limits of certain learned rules of use associated with formulae for literary appreciation. Where these rules are transgressed, the result extends little further than a perceived relaxation of certain linguistic prescriptions.

Limitations

Acceptance of these conclusions and the consequent discussion of implications must be tempered by the acknowledgment of certain limitations in the study. Perhaps foremost among these is a continuing awareness of the rather tenuous nature of literary response. Necessarily, perhaps, response to literature remains the least objective, least measurable component of an English program. As Slatoff (1970) asserts, "the moment we try to understand literary works in relation to readers we take on problems which do not arise so long as we look only at the works themselves." (5) Clearly, the unstructured written responses which form the basis of this study reveal information, not about the subjects' capacity to respond, but about their public responses at a fixed, temporal point in their potential encounters with a short story and a poem. At best, there is the further tacit assumption that variations within and between the two writing phases, caused by factors as widely separated as the writer's emotional state and physical differences in the writing environment, will even themselves out over a large population to produce a consistency of response patterns at the level of broad response preferences.

Despite the explicitness and admittedly comprehensive nature of the system for coding written responses provided by Purves and Rippere (1968), Chapters Three and Five have revealed some uncertainties in approaching discrete response statements or complete protocols. The achievement of an acceptable level of reliability between the investigator and an independent analyst, while reducing the possible effects of this limitation, still begs the question of the nature of certain procedures used in both the quantitative and qualitative analysis. On the quantitative level, the coding of responses is occasionally tentative and intuitive, making associated demands on the coder's skills of interpretation. In Nicol's (1975) words:

> Content-analytic procedures take time, both for administration and for interpretation and analysis of the data. And still one cannot assume that the time spent will necessarily be paid by increasing validity; a reader may be no more accurate in expressing his own response than he is in recognizing it among a series of options. (77)

More importantly, the qualitative interest subverts the original, stated intention of Purves' Elements, that of "assuring a neutral, public, and comprehensive reading of a great number of essays" (1-2), by applying a subjective approach to the content of response statements or complete protocols.

Next, the restriction of the stimuli to a single short story and a single poem imposes distinct limits on any discussion of genre-related differences in response. The results of any such comparative analysis are, to a large extent, pre-ordained by the idiosyncratic features of the selected literature. While the questionnaire method of eliciting preferred categories of response to short stories in general, or to poems in general, is a useful supplement to content analysis of written responses to isolated examples of the two genres, there seems no alternative to the future use of a wider range of stories or poems. The researcher would need, however, to select the literature according to immanent criteria of form and content likely to produce a range of responses from readers of different ages.

There is, in addition, a very obvious sense in which the analysis of written responses to literature is tied to overall developments or differences in writing ability. The study accepts this equation, yet eschews any thoroughgoing analysis of potentially interesting changes in the rhetoric of response in favor of a consideration of the more relevant question of changes in the content of the response, as enshrined in Purves' categories and subcategories.

Similarly, the decision to rest selection of the sample population on the processes of teacher nomination as opposed to the results of a standardized reading test may have created problems in interpretation through the absence of any direct evidence of student reading ability. Results reported for "average" students, therefore, may be colored by problems which these students may have encountered as a result of either passage difficulty or reading impairment. Since readability formulae are generally not adaptable to poems, comparisons between the two genres may have been affected to an unknown degree by the relative reading difficulty of the two selections.

Although the results of the follow-up teacher questionnaire suggest a causal relationship between stated teaching objectives and changing patterns of response throughout the grades, any attempt to relate the effects of instruction to response differences remains inferential. In the absence of direct classroom observation, the question of the relative importance of maturation and instructional emphases also remains unanswered.

The study also suffers from the intrusion of uncontrolled variables which are characteristic of cross-sectional, as opposed to longitudinal or true developmental studies. Whereas the latter types of study provide a desirable continuity in both the sample itself and associated changes in pedagogy, cross-sectional studies must acknowledge the existence of a transient and shifting sample, of groups of students which have begun their schooling at different times and under the impress of shifting pedagogies.

Finally, the usual limits of generalizability as applied to the sampled population are exacerbated through the study's strong subsidiary interest in noting cross-cultural differences in patterns of response. Although considerable care was taken to ensure that the Australian sample was proportionally representative of the range of high schools which characterize the Australian setting, a much larger sample (with greater regional representation) might be needed to discern if the direction of cross-cultural differences and similarities suggested by the results of this study are accurate.

Implications for Teaching

With the above limitations in mind, certain implications for the teaching of literature in secondary schools are evident in this study.

First, curriculum planners in literature can assume that students of different ages will respond to literature in vastly different ways, provided teachers continue to approach the task of literature instruction within the context of conflicting paradigms, apparently differentiated according to grade levels. The first paradigm admits the validity of personal responses for younger students, while the second inexorably shifts the emphasis in later grades to objective perceptions and interpretations which presuppose an ontological existence for the literary work completely separate from the reader. Almost invariably, the responses of students labelled superior by their teachers emphasize analytic, interpretive, or evaluative responses at the expense of statements which reflect engagement with the literary work.

The differences evident in the questionnaire responses for stories and poem encountered in a school setting, for literature in general encountered in an out-of-school setting, and the content of the protocols themselves provide a clear indication of the students' understanding of the sanctions imposed in classroom contexts. In this sense, both students and teachers appear to acknowledge the distinction which Barnes (1976) draws between "action knowledge" and "school knowledge," and the discontinuity of intentions which Britton (1977) applies to the uses of language in out-of-school and in-school contexts. Specifically, if questions of engagement are uniformly important only in informal settings, it is because they acknowledge the importance of private systems of construing, of knowledge assimilated to the student's own purposes. Yet these personal responses are somehow not as "correct" in the context of the English classroom, where the demand to make a response public is tied to the teacher's conception of interpretive or formal significance. At the very least, then, the fervent efforts to stress analysis and interpretation should be balanced, at all levels, by a recognition of the importance of the student's engagement with the work of literature.

Any extension of the current limits of validity placed on "school knowledge" would appear to require the admission of alternative epistemologies and practices in the teacher training phase. Slatoff (1970), Mandel (1970), Bleich (1975), and Holland (1976) have documented approaches within the subjective and transactive paradigms which might inform the methodology of the literature component of English teacher preparation. Both literature and methods classes need to mutually encourage a closer attention to the processes of reader-text interaction as an ongoing activity. Classroom teachers need to extend, explore, and develop their own personal responses to literature before they can hope to extend and facilitate the same dimensions of growth in their pupils.

The preponderance of responses in Subcategories 130: Reaction to Content, 230: Content, and 320: Interpretation of Content for both the short story and the poem suggests a clear starting point for discussions of matters deemed important by students. Teachers at all levels of the secondary school may need to dwell rather longer on dimensions of content, on the human drama of literature, in order to capitalize on the students' natural inclination to react emotionally to, perceive, and extract meaning from the sequence of events and the elements of characterization which relate most directly to their own lives.

With more specific regard to poetry, the nature of student interest in matters of form and technique is often counter-productive. While the older students in particular expect to focus on the structural and technical elements of poetry, their responses are often formulaic and perfunctory, suggesting that considerations of form are often afterthoughts, linguistic puzzles to be solved separately from the experience of personal engagement and interpretation. For most of these student, perception of form continues to involve sets of technical labels -- imagery, simile, metaphor, irony, personification, alliteration and the rest -- duly pinned to appropriate specimens. The teaching problem, especially in the upper grades of the secondary school, remains how to present the poetics so that the poetry itself is not obscured.

Probably the most unproductive "finding" of the study was the virtually uniform dismissal by the students of the invitation to direct their responses as much to the peer group as to the teacher. Although any study of written response should acknowledge the effects of a sense of audience, the mere stipulation of an audience other than the teacher presupposes a set of instructional practices in which students have been encouraged to write for a range of specified audiences. Until such practices become widespread, it is unlikely that the written response (in line with the findings of the London Writing Research Unit, Britton _et al_., 1975) will reveal much more than an overwhelming preoccupation with divining the expectations of the teacher as informed critic.

Recommendations for Further Research

Especially over the last decade there has been an impressive array of studies concerned with the nature of response to literature. Nevertheless, many questions remain unanswered, and proposed answers remain problematic given the absence of an encompassing theoretical framework which can command a large measure of consensus. What is important, however, is that investigators continue to develop, from a base of even partially adumbrated theory, research designs which consolidate and refine systems of content analysis, which probe the kind and quality of the developing responses of students of different ages, and which attempt to explain the effects of instructional strategies and context on changes in the patterns of response. Future research studies might consider the following:

1. The two most widely used systems of content analysis (those of Squire and Purves) could be applied to the same responses. In the process, the systems themselves could be integrated in order to provide a reliable taxonomy of elements which would be developmentally instructive for the classroom teacher. Perhaps the generation of new combinations of elements would both ameliorate the classification problems which this study encountered, and clarify the relation between theory and instrumentation in future studies.

2. Still at the level of instrumentation, the various procedures used in this and other studies need to be comparatively applied across a range of literary stimuli. The results of content analysis of free responses have yet to be compared directly with those obtained from the questionnaire method, holding both the literature and the sampled population constant.

3. The present study needs to be replicated intact, or with important modifications. Either a larger number of stories and poems varying along the narrative dimension could be used, or a range of examples from each genre could be selected on the basis of definable differences in form, content, or technique. Hypothesized changes in the patterns of response, at various age and ability levels, could then be related to generic and textual criteria isolated in advance by the researcher.

4. Also, it is important to know whether the similarity of responses unearthed for this study's single story and single poem is matched when the genres are as structurally different as the novel and drama. Ideally, the question of consistency of response, as

related to various types of literature, should combine poetry, short stories, drama, and novels in the one study.

5. Studies comparing the responses of students of different ages to literature and to theatre, film, or television would help to determine if there is any correlation between responses to written works and the performing media. These analyses could discern if consistencies in response patterns are limited to a specific medium, or if they represent a general pattern of reaction to various art forms.

6. A crucial study would involve the actual observation of the teaching behaviors of a number of teachers as they presented the same pieces of literature across a range of grade levels in an attempt to relate differential teaching strategies to observed changes in the patterns of student response.

7. A related need exists to develop classroom interaction analysis schemes which will be adequate to the task of describing the unique features of the classroom study of literature, either at the level of intact class groups or for smaller groups within classes. Such systems should be able to isolate those elements which directly affect the response process from other variables within the total matrix of classroom discourse.

8. Further research is needed to assess the influence of context on response. Such studies, if they are to provide reliable data, would need to be set in extra-mural environments, and allow for the provision of student-selected as opposed to teacher-selected materials.

9. Intensive case study procedures need to be employed to develop a more encompassing picture of changes in the response processes of superior and average readers. Ideally, only longitudinal studies will be able to show the changes in and inter-relationships among such factors as cognitive style, personality variables, and reading habits.

10. At the opposite extreme, the patterns of response which characterize large groups of students differentiated by ethnicity, geography, social class, dialect, and culture need to be further explored. In the manner of the IEA study the nature of such patterns needs to be described, their pervasiveness established, and a range of explanatory hypotheses developed and tested.

Concluding Statement

In the final analysis, then, this study adds its voice to others which attest to the effectiveness of schools in "indoctrinating" students into approved and culturally specific patterns of literary response. The eliciting of "free response" protocols proved an ideal mechanism for supporting Squire's assertion, reported in Chapter One, that these responses "reflect more what students have been taught to think and feel about literature, rather than what they actually think and feel."

This corroborative finding is, in itself, important because it answers the persistent educational question: "Do schools or teachers make a difference?" On the other hand, of course, it is the responsibility of the individual teacher to accept or question the sameness of the difference. If a majority of teachers value, but do not reward, critical suppleness and eclecticism, if curriculum statements value the open, tentative response, yet students are bound to an interpretive, content-oriented rail, then some method must be found to intervene between belief and execution. As Purves (1974) cryptically notes: "It would seem that curriculum planners might do well either to change their rhetoric or to change their curricula." (70)

Through a procedural sleight-of-hand this study managed to freeze the moving film of literary response on its final frame. The image is close to Britton's (1977), when he describes the process of response as "less like a train appearing coach by coach out of a tunnel . . . than it is like a photographic negative taking shape in a developing dish." (23) Both sets of analogies mirror a tension in epistemology and pedagogy which establish the boundaries of current theories of literary response and their implications for classroom practice.

Purves' system of content analysis, based as it is in fairly traditional literary critical theory, remains essentially an accounting procedure, useful for numbering (and even describing) the coaches or individual statements of response. Yet it is a matter of some consequence that the major coding difficulties occur within and between the stances of Engagement and Evaluation. Without a distinct sense of individual perceptual and cognitive styles, of individual tastes and motives for reading, the information which Purves provides for teachers carries disturbing implications. Lurking behind the consistency of group patterns of response is the larger question of the relationship of literature and response to literature, to acculturation and socialization.

The alternative to quantitative procedures, to the objective paradigm, is provided by theorists and teachers such as Britton, Holland, Iser, and Bleich. Knowledge, for them, is created, developed, and synthesized only through the subjective initiative of the individual. They would have us replace the spurious authority of the text, or the standard literary critical essay, with a respect for the individual re-symbolizations of the black marks on the page, for the developing response. Perhaps the most important residual challenge facing the English teacher is still that search for a method which will not pre-judge the shape of individually constructed interpretive communities.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE USE OF FORCE
CORNER

THE USE OF FORCE

They were new patients to me, all I had was the name, Olson. Please come down as soon as you can, my daughter is very sick.

When I arrived I was met by the mother, a big startled looking woman, very clean and apologetic who merely said, Is this the doctor? and let me in. In the back, she added. You must excuse us, doctor, we have her in the kitchen where it is warm. It is very damp here sometimes.

The child was fully dressed and sitting on her father's lap near the kitchen table. He tried to get up, but I motioned for him not to bother, took off my overcoat and started to look things over. I could see that they were all very nervous, eyeing me up and down distrustfully. As often, in such cases, they weren't telling me more than they had to, it was up to me to tell them; that's why they were spending three dollars on me.

The child was fairly eating me up with her cold, steady eyes, and no expression to her face whatever. She did not move and seemed, inwardly, quiet, an unusually attractive little thing, and as strong as a heifer in appearance. But her face was flushed, she was breathing rapidly, and I realized that she had a high fever. She had magnificent blonde hair, in profusion. One of those picture children often reproduced in advertising leaflets and the photogravure sections of the Sunday papers.

She's had a fever for three days, began the father and we don't know what it comes from. My wife has given her things, you know, like people do, but it don't do no good. And there's been a lot of sickness around. So we tho't you'd better look her over and tell us what is the matter.

As doctors often do I took a trial shot at it as a point of departure. Has she had a sore throat?

Both parents answered me together, No ... No, she says her throat don't hurt her.

Does your throat hurt you? added the mother to the child. But the little girl's expression didn't change nor did she move her eyes from my face.

Have you looked?

I tried to, said the mother, but I couldn't see.

As it happens we had been having a number of cases of diphtheria in the school to which this child went during that month and we were all, quite apparently, thinking of that, though no one had as yet spoken of the thing.

Well, I said, suppose we take a look at the throat first. I smiled in my best professional manner and asking for the child's first name I said, come on, Mathilda, open your mouth and let's take a look at your throat.

Nothing doing.

Aw, come on, I coaxed, just open your mouth wide and let me take a look. Look, I said opening both hands wide, I haven't anything in my hands. Just open up and let me see.

Such a nice man, put in the mother. Look how kind he is to you. Come on, do what he tells you to. He won't hurt you.

At that I ground my teeth in disgust. If only they wouldn't use the word "hurt" I might be able to get somewhere. But I did not allow myself to be hurried or disturbed but speaking quietly and slowly I approached the child again.

As I moved my chair a little nearer suddenly with one catlike movement both her hands clawed instinctively for my eyes and she almost reached them too. In fact she knocked my glasses flying and they fell, though unbroken, several feet away from me on the kitchen floor.

Both the mother and father almost turned themselves inside out in embarrassment and apology. You bad girl, said the mother, taking her and shaking her by one arm. Look what you've done. The nice man ...

For heaven's sake, I broke in. Don't call me a nice man to her. I'm here to look at her throat on the chance that she might have diphtheria and possibly die of it. But that's nothing to her. Look here, I said to the child, we're going to look at your throat. You're old enough to understand what I'm saying. Will you open it now by yourself or shall we have to open it for you?

Not a move. Even her expression hadn't changed. Her breaths however were coming faster and faster. Then the battle began. I had to do it. I had to have a throat culture for her own protection. But first I told the parents that it was entirely up to them. I explained the danger but said that I would not insist on a throat examination so long as they would take the responsibility.

If you don't do what the doctor says you'll have to go to the hospital, the mother admonished her severely.

Oh yeah? I had to smile to myself. After all, I had already fallen in love with the savage brat, the parents were contemptible to me. In the ensuing struggle they grew more and more abject, crushed, exhausted while she surely rose to magnificent heights of insane fury of effort bred of her terror of me.

The father tried his best, and he was a big man but the fact that she was his daughter, his shame at her behavior and his dread of hurting her made him release her just at the critical moment several times when I had almost achieved success, till I wanted to kill him. But his dread also that she might have diphtheria made him tell me to go on, go on though he himself was almost fainting, while the mother moved back and forth behind us raising and lowering her hands in an agony of apprehension.

Put her in front of you on your lap, I ordered, and hold both her wrists.

But as soon as he did the child let out a scream. Don't you're hurting me. Let go of my hands. Let them go I tell you. Then she shrieked terrifyingly, hysterically. Stop it! Stop it! You're killing me!

Do you think she can stand it, doctor; said the mother.

You get out, said the husband to his wife. Do you want her to die of diphtheria?

Come on now, hold her, I said.

Then I grasped the child's head with my left hand and tried to get the wooden tongue depressor between her teeth. She fought, with clenched teeth, desperately! But now I also had grown furious - at a child. I tried to hold myself down but I couldn't. I know how to expose a throat for inspection. And I did my best. When finally I got the wooden spatula behind the last teeth and just the point of it into the mouth cavity, she opened up for an instant but before I could see anything she came down again and gripping the wooden blade between her molars she reduced it to splinters before I could get it out again.

Aren't you ashamed, the mother yelled at her. Aren't you ashamed to act like that in front of the doctor?

Get me a smooth-handled spoon of some sort, I told the mother. We're going through with this. The child's mouth was already bleeding. Her tongue was cut and she was screaming in wild hysterical shrieks. Perhaps I should have desisted and come back in an hour or more. No doubt it would have been better. But I have seen at least two children lying dead in bed of neglect in such cases, and feeling that I must get a diagnosis now or never I went at it again. But the worst of it was that I too had got beyond reason. I could have torn the child apart in my own fury and enjoyed it. It was a pleasure to attack her. My face was burning with it.

The damned little brat must be protected against her own idiocy, one says to one's self at such time. Others must be protected against her. It is a social necessity. And all these things are true. But a blind fury, a feeling of adult shame, bred of a longing for muscular release are the operatives. One goes on to the end.

In a final unreasoning assault I overpowered the child's neck and jaws. I forced the heavy silver spoon back of her teeth and down her throat till she gagged. And there it was -- both tonsils covered with membrane. She had fought valiantly to keep me from knowing her secret. She had been hiding that sore throat for three days at least and lying to her parents in order to escape just such an outcome as this.

Now truly she was furious. She had been on the defensive before but now she attacked. Tried to get off her father's lap and fly at me while tears of defeat blinded her eyes.

William Carlos Williams

CORNER

Ralph Pomeroy

The cop slumps alertly on his motorcycle,
Supported by one leg like a leather stork,
His glance accuses me of loitering.
I can see his eyes moving like fish
In the green depths of his green goggles.

His ease is fake. I can tell.
My ease is fake. And he can tell.
The fingers armoured by his gloves,
Splay and clench, itching to change something.
As if he were my enemy or my death,
I just stand there watching.

I spit out my gum which has gone stale.
I knock out a new cigarette -
Which is my bravery/
It is all imperceptible
The way I shift my weight,
The way he creaks in his saddle.

The traffic is specific though constant.
The sun surrounds me, divides the street between us
His crash helmet is white in the shade.
It is like a bull ring as they say it is just before the fighting
I cannot back down. I am there.

Everything holds me back/
I am in danger of disappearing into the sunny dust.
My levis bake and my T shirt sweats.

My cigarette makes my eyes burn
But I don't dare drop it.
Who made him my enemy?
Prince of coolness. King of Fear
Who do I lean here waiting?
Why does he lounge there watching?

I am becoming sunlight
My hair is on fire, my boots run like tar.
I am hung-up by the bright air.

Something breaks through all of a sudden,
and he blasts off, quick as a craver,
Smug in his power; watching me watch.

APPENDIX B

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES

TABLE A

MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES IN GRADES 8, 10, AND 12 FOR SUBCATEGORIES INELIGIBLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE: STORY AND POEM COMBINED

	Mean Response %'s		
Subcategory	Grade 8	Grade 10	Grade 12
100	1.88	0.84	0.16
220	0.15	0.52	1.94
250	1.00	0.46	1.58
270	0.13	0.19	1.30
280	0.00	0.08	0.07
310	0.07	0.23	0.19

TABLE B

MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES IN GRADES 8, 10, AND 12 FOR SUBCATEGORIES INELIGIBLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE: "THE USE OF FORCE"

	Mean Response %'s		
Subcategory	Grade 8	Grade 10	Grade 12
100	1.09	0.66	0.24
200	1.66	1.74	0.29
250	1.24	0.78	1.30
270	0.00	0.13	0.65
280	0.00	0.16	0.08
300	1.04	0.73	1.48
310	0.00	0.06	0.00

TABLE C

MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES IN GRADES 8, 10, AND 12 FOR SUBCATEGORIES INELIGIBLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE: "CORNER"

	Mean Response %'s		
Subcategory	Grade 8	Grade 10	Grade 12
100	2.66	1.02	0.07
250	0.76	0.15	1.85
270	0.26	0.26	1.95
280	0.00	0.00	0.07
310	0.15	0.40	0.37
350	0.21	1.19	1.49

TABLE D

SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES IN RESPONSES TO "THE USE OF FORCE" AND "CORNER" AT GRADE 8: CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	"The Use of Force" (N=40)	"Corner" (N=40)	F Ratio (df=1;78)	Prob.
Engagement	26.72	24.61	0.27	NS
Perception	33.10	35.02	0.11	NS
Interpretation	10.55	14.61	1.70	NS
Evaluation	23.62	19.25	2.49	NS
Miscellaneous	5.11	5.71	0.17	NS
Subcategory 110	2.26	4.64	1.66	NS
Subcategory 120	7.52	3.61	5.07	*
Subcategory 130	15.97	13.70	0.37	NS
Subcategory 200	1.66	0.69	9.45	**
Subcategory 210	2.67	1.52	1.00	NS
Subcategory 230	23.65	24.54	0.03	NS
Subcategory 240	1.18	0.19	2.91	NS
Subcategory 260	2.46	0.76	3.15	NS
Subcategory 300	1.04	1.60	0.25	NS
Subcategory 320	6.87	10.66	2.79	NS
Subcategory 330	1.57	1.47	0.01	NS
Subcategory 340	0.32	0.52	0.34	NS
Subcategory 350	0.01	0.00	2.91	NS
Subcategory 400	7.02	8.17	0.64	NS
Subcategory 410	3.23	2.32	1.05	NS
Subcategory 420	11.43	7.02	3.70	NS
Subcategory 430	2.16	2.12	0.00	NS
Subcategory 500	5.11	5.71	0.17	NS

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

TABLE E

SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES IN RESPONSES TO "THE USE OF FORCE" AND "CORNER" AT GRADE 10: CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES

Cat./Subcategory	Mean Response %'s "The Use of Force" (N=40)	"Corner" (N=40)	F Ratio (df=1;78)	Prob.
Engagement	17.71	19.01	0.23	NS
Perception	32.96	27.81	2.02	NS
Interpretation	28.70	34.77	2.33	NS
Evaluation	15.43	13.85	0.37	NS
Miscellaneous	5.23	4.57	0.16	NS
Subcategory 110	1.36	1.60	0.07	NS
Subcategory 120	1.40	1.16	0.10	NS
Subcategory 130	14.28	15.24	0.12	NS
Subcategory 200	1.74	1.83	0.01	NS
Subcategory 210	2.45	1.77	0.96	NS
Subcategory 230	26.69	16.36	7.76	**
Subcategory 240	0.76	1.74	0.80	NS
Subcategory 260	0.57	3.81	11.16	**
Subcategory 300	0.73	1.79	2.25	NS
Subcategory 320	17.64	21.58	1.83	NS
Subcategory 330	5.22	5.67	0.07	NS
Subcategory 340	1.88	4.17	4.12	*
Subcategory 350	3.30	1.19	5.32	*
Subcategory 400	5.27	4.20	0.56	NS
Subcategory 410	1.72	1.43	0.17	NS
Subcategory 420	6.28	5.06	0.35	NS
Subcategory 430	2.16	3.08	0.49	NS
Subcategory 500	5.23	4.57	0.16	NS

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

TABLE F

SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES IN RESPONSES TO "THE USE OF FORCE" AND "CORNER" AT GRADE 12: CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	"The Use of Force" (N=40)	"Corner" (N=40)	F Ratio (df=1;78)	Prob.
Engagement	12.30	9.55	1.34	NS
Perception	29.37	38.00	3.95	NS
Interpretation	35.24	32.40	0.46	NS
Evaluation	17.88	14.82	0.89	NS
Miscellaneous	5.50	4.67	0.17	NS
Subcategory 110	1.31	1.23	0.01	NS
Subcategory 120	1.60	1.53	0.01	NS
Subcategory 130	9.15	6.72	1.46	NS
Subcategory 200	0.29	0.32	0.01	NS
Subcategory 210	2.02	4.31	2.35	NS
Subcategory 230	21.39	14.66	3.97	*
Subcategory 240	1.93	4.68	5.37	*
Subcategory 260	1.68	6.34	9.63	**
Subcategory 300	1.48	1.49	0.00	NS
Subcategory 320	17.02	15.11	1.08	NS
Subcategory 330	7.03	8.45	0.63	NS
Subcategory 340	6.48	5.47	0.39	NS
Subcategory 350	3.24	1.49	3.12	NS
Subcategory 400	4.20	2.26	2.30	NS
Subcategory 410	2.12	0.74	7.74	**
Subcategory 420	7.99	8.65	0.10	NS
Subcategory 430	3.57	3.30	0.15	NS
Subcategory 500	5.50	4.67	0.17	NS

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

TABLE G

RESPONSES BY SEX TO THE STORY AND POEM COMBINED FOR GRADE 8: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	Male (N=40)	Female (N=40)	F Ratio (df=1;78)	Prob.
Engagement	22.54	28.79	2.32	NS
Perception	37.22	30.90	1.19	NS
Interpretation	12.94	12.21	0.05	NS
Evaluation	19.99	22.87	0.55	NS
Miscelleaneous	7.21	3.61	5.04	*
Subcategory 110	2.61	4.28	0.78	NS
Subcategory 120	4.69	6.44	1.01	NS
Subcategory 130	13.38	16.28	0.68	NS
Subcategory 200	5.15	3.41	0.79	NS
Subcategory 210	1.44	2.76	1.14	NS
Subcategory 230	27.52	20.68	1.37	NS
Subcategory 240	0.67	0.70	0.00	NS
Subcategory 260	1.93	1.28	0.45	NS
Subcategory 300	2.00	0.64	1.68	NS
Subcategory 320	8.32	9.21	0.14	NS
Subcategory 330	1.75	1.28	0.15	NS
Subcategory 340	0.47	0.38	0.04	NS
Subcategory 350	0.40	0.55	0.12	NS
Subcategory 400	9.57	5.63	4.11	*
Subcategory 410	1.46	4.09	6.55	*
Subcategory 420	7.80	10.65	1.12	NS
Subcategory 430	1.39	2.89	2.23	NS
Subcategory 500	7.21	3.61	5.04	*

* $p < .05$

TABLE H

RESPONSES TO "THE USE OF FORCE" BY SEX FOR GRADE 8: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	Male (N=20)	Female (N=20)	F Ratio (df=1;38)	Prob.
Engagement	25.62	27.81	0.19	NS
Perception	33.30	32.89	0.00	NS
Interpretation	10.40	10.70	0.01	NS
Evaluation	24.98	22.96	0.24	NS
Miscellaneous	5.72	4.50	0.32	NS
Subcategory 110	2.97	1.55	0.93	NS
Subcategory 120	7.10	7.94	0.09	NS
Subcategory 130	15.38	16.55	0.07	NS
Subcategory 210	2.88	2.47	0.04	NS
Subcategory 230	23.08	24.23	0.02	NS
Subcategory 240	1.34	1.02	0.88	NS
Subcategory 260	3.45	1.47	1.40	NS
Subcategory 320	6.65	7.10	0.02	NS
Subcategory 330	1.43	1.71	0.03	NS
Subcategory 340	0.26	0.38	0.07	NS
Subcategory 350	0.38	1.10	0.98	NS
Subcategory 400	8.89	5.15	2.79	NS
Subcategory 410	1.83	4.62	3.28	NS
Subcategory 420	12.61	10.24	0.29	NS
Subcategory 430	1.66	2.67	0.53	NS
Subcategory 500	5.72	4.50	0.32	NS

TABLE I

RESPONSES TO "CORNER" BY SEX FOR GRADE 8: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	Male (N=20)	Female (N=20)	F Ratio (df=1;38)	Prob.
Engagement	19.46	29.77	2.49	NS
Perception	41.14	28.91	2.13	NS
Interpretation	15.48	13.73	0.13	NS
Evaluation	15.01	23.48	2.55	NS
Miscellaneous	8.71	2.72	6.43	**
Subcategory 110	2.25	7.02	1.94	NS
Subcategory 120	2.27	4.95	1.70	NS
Subcategory 130	11.39	16.01	0.69	NS
Subcategory 200	8.21	5.59	0.56	NS
Subcategory 210	0.00	3.04	5.11	*
Subcategory 220	0.00	0.15	1.00	NS
Subcategory 230	31.97	17.12	3.33	NS
Subcategory 240	0.00	0.38	1.00	NS
Subcategory 260	0.41	1.11	0.61	NS
Subcategory 300	2.33	0.86	1.37	NS
Subcategory 320	9.98	11.33	0.12	NS
Subcategory 330	2.08	0.86	0.47	NS
Subcategory 340	0.66	0.38	0.21	NS
Subcategory 400	10.24	6.11	1.64	NS
Subcategory 410	1.08	3.56	3.18	NS
Subcategory 420	2.98	11.06	8.32	**
Subcategory 430	1.12	3.12	1.81	NS
Subcategory 500	8.71	2.72	6.43	**

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

TABLE J

RESPONSES BY SEX TO THE STORY AND POEM COMBINED FOR GRADE 10: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	Male (N=40)	Female (N=40)	F Ratio (df=1;78)	Prob.
Engagement	18.37	18.35	0.00	NS
Perception	30.01	30.75	0.02	NS
Interpretation	33.25	30.22	0.34	NS
Evaluation	12.96	16.32	0.89	NS
Miscellaneous	5.43	4.37	0.40	NS
Subcategory 110	1.23	1.73	0.29	NS
Subcategory 120	1.42	1.14	0.11	NS
Subcategory 130	15.38	14.13	0.14	NS
Subcategory 200	1.27	2.30	0.95	NS
Subcategory 210	2.14	2.08	0.00	NS
Subcategory 230	21.37	21.68	0.00	NS
Subcategory 240	1.37	1.12	0.06	NS
Subcategory 260	2.17	2.21	0.00	NS
Subcategory 300	0.77	1.76	1.85	NS
Subcategory 320	18.31	20.91	0.70	NS
Subcategory 330	8.25	2.64	7.99	*
Subcategory 340	3.31	2.74	0.11	NS
Subcategory 350	2.36	2.13	0.04	NS
Subcategory 400	3.90	5.57	0.97	NS
Subcategory 410	1.45	1.69	0.12	NS
Subcategory 420	4.48	6.85	1.43	NS
Subcategory 430	3.13	2.11	0.56	NS
Subcategory 500	5.43	4.37	0.40	NS

* $p < .05$

TABLE K

RESPONSES TO "THE USE OF FORCE" BY SEX FOR GRADE 10: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	Male (N=20)	Female (N=20)	F Ratio (df=1;38)	Prob.
Engagement	18.67	16.75	0.11	NS
Perception	34.02	31.90	0.07	NS
Interpretation	30.95	26.44	0.48	NS
Evaluation	11.93	18.92	2.10	NS
Miscellaneous	4.45	6.01	0.58	NS
Subcategory 110	0.68	2.04	0.84	NS
Subcategory 120	1.66	1.14	0.15	NS
Subcategory 130	16.10	12.46	0.48	NS
Subcategory 210	3.00	1.91	0.44	NS
Subcategory 230	27.47	25.92	0.39	NS
Subcategory 240	0.50	1.01	0.55	NS
Subcategory 260	0.75	0.39	0.36	NS
Subcategory 320	16.99	18.30	0.14	NS
Subcategory 330	8.57	1.88	5.99	*
Subcategory 340	1.65	2.11	0.08	NS
Subcategory 350	3.26	3.35	0.00	NS
Subcategory 400	3.55	0.07	2.16	NS
Subcategory 410	1.12	2.32	1.73	NS
Subcategory 420	4.22	8.33	1.85	NS
Subcategory 430	3.05	1.28	1.43	NS
Subcategory 500	4.45	6.01	0.58	NS

* $p < .05$

TABLE L

RESPONSES BY SEX TO THE STORY AND POEM COMBINED FOR GRADE 12: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	Male (N=40)	Female (N=40)	F Ratio (df=1;78)	Prob.
Engagement	9.38	12.47	1.17	NS
Perception	34.99	32.38	0.30	NS
Interpretation	36.50	31.13	1.37	NS
Evaluation	14.00	18.70	1.26	NS
Miscellaneous	4.85	5.33	0.05	NS
Subcategory 110	1.68	0.86	1.28	NS
Subcategory 120	1.08	2.05	1.56	NS
Subcategory 130	6.53	9.34	1.39	NS
Subcategory 200	0.11	0.05	2.03	NS
Subcategory 210	3.57	2.75	0.28	NS
Subcategory 230	17.89	18.15	0.01	NS
Subcategory 240	3.20	3.41	0.02	NS
Subcategory 260	3.79	4.22	0.07	NS
Subcategory 300	2.09	0.89	1.47	NS
Subcategory 320	14.98	17.15	0.62	NS
Subcategory 330	10.02	5.46	4.84	*
Subcategory 340	6.91	5.04	1.16	NS
Subcategory 350	2.30	2.42	0.16	NS
Subcategory 400	3.59	2.87	0.27	NS
Subcategory 410	1.04	1.82	1.02	NS
Subcategory 420	6.66	9.98	1.61	NS
Subcategory 430	2.72	4.15	2.26	NS
Subcategory 500	4.85	5.33	0.05	NS

* $p < .05$

TABLE M

RESPONSES TO "THE USE OF FORCE" BY SEX FOR GRADE 12: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	Male (N=20)	Female (N=20)	F Ratio (df=1;38)	Prob.
Engagement	11.51	13.08	0.13	NS
Perception	31.47	27.28	0.51	NS
Interpretation	37.11	33.38	0.31	NS
Evaluation	14.53	21.23	1.09	NS
Miscellaneous	5.95	5.05	0.07	NS
Subcategory 110	2.22	0.40	2.93	NS
Subcategory 120	1.60	1.59	0.00	NS
Subcategory 130	7.50	10.80	0.86	NS
Subcategory 210	1.89	2.15	0.04	NS
Subcategory 230	22.97	19.81	0.36	NS
Subcategory 240	2.02	1.84	0.03	NS
Subcategory 260	1.64	1.72	0.01	NS
Subcategory 320	16.35	17.69	0.12	NS
Subcategory 330	9.01	5.05	2.66	NS
Subcategory 340	5.95	7.01	0.18	NS
Subcategory 350	3.59	2.88	0.19	NS
Subcategory 400	4.33	4.07	0.01	NS
Subcategory 410	1.75	2.49	0.31	NS
Subcategory 420	5.21	10.78	2.50	NS
Subcategory 430	3.25	3.90	0.25	NS
Subcategory 500	5.95	5.05	0.07	NS

TABLE N

RESPONSES TO "CORNER" BY SEX FOR GRADE 10: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	Male (N=20)	Female (N=20)	F Ratio (df=1;38)	Prob.
Engagement	18.06	19.95	0.16	NS
Perception	26.01	29.61	0.35	NS
Interpretation	35.55	34.00	0.04	NS
Evaluation	13.98	13.72	0.00	NS
Miscellaneous	6.42	2.73	1.97	NS
Subcategory 110	1.77	1.42	0.09	NS
Subcategory 120	1.18	1.14	0.00	NS
Subcategory 130	14.66	15.81	0.07	NS
Subcategory 200	0.61	3.06	3.99	*
Subcategory 210	1.29	2.25	0.66	NS
Subcategory 220	1.33	0.77	0.38	NS
Subcategory 230	15.26	17.45	0.17	NS
Subcategory 240	2.25	1.22	0.24	NS
Subcategory 260	3.58	4.04	0.05	NS
Subcategory 300	1.07	2.52	1.17	NS
Subcategory 320	19.62	23.53	0.58	NS
Subcategory 330	7.94	3.40	2.38	NS
Subcategory 340	4.97	3.37	0.28	NS
Subcategory 400	4.25	4.16	0.00	NS
Subcategory 410	1.78	1.07	.048	NS
Subcategory 420	4.74	5.37	0.06	NS
Subcategory 430	3.21	2.95	0.01	NS
Subcategory 500	6.42	2.73	1.97	NS

* $p < .05$

TABLE O

RESPONSES TO "CORNER" BY SEX FOR GRADE 12: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

Cat./Subcategory	Mean Response %'s Male (N=20)	Female (N=20)	F Ratio (df=1;38)	Prob.
Engagement	7.26	11.85	1.59	NS
Perception	38.52	37.48	0.02	NS
Interpretation	35.91	28.89	1.18	NS
Evaluation	13.47	16.17	0.24	NS
Miscellaneous	3.74	5.60	0.42	NS
Subcategory 110	1.14	1.31	0.03	NS
Subcategory 120	0.55	2.51	3.41	NS
Subcategory 130	5.57	7.88	0.52	NS
Subcategory 200	0.22	0.42	0.28	NS
Subcategory 210	5.26	3.36	0.47	NS
Subcategory 220	4.77	2.57	1.21	NS
Subcategory 230	12.81	16.50	0.48	NS
Subcategory 240	4.39	4.97	0.05	NS
Subcategory 260	5.95	6.73	0.08	NS
Subcategory 300	1.95	1.04	0.54	NS
Subcategory 320	13.61	16.61	0.57	NS
Subcategory 330	11.03	5.87	2.29	NS
Subcategory 340	7.88	3.06	4.15	*
Subcategory 400	2.84	1.67	0.84	NS
Subcategory 410	0.32	1.16	1.05	NS
Subcategory 420	8.12	9.18	0.07	NS
Subcategory 430	2.19	4.41	2.49	NS
Subcategory 500	3.74	4.86	0.15	NS

* $p < .05$

TABLE P

RESPONSES BY ABILITY TO THE STORY AND POEM COMBINED FOR GRADE 8: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	Superior (N=40)	Average (N=40)	F Ratio (df=1;78)	Prob.
Engagement	24.84	26.49	0.16	NS
Perception	30.29	37.82	1.70	NS
Interpretation	15.56	9.60	3.57	NS
Evaluation	21.58	21.28	0.01	NS
Miscellaneous	7.18	3.65	4.82	*
Subcategory 110	3.21	3.69	0.06	NS
Subcategory 120	5.60	5.53	0.00	NS
Subcategory 130	14.01	15.66	0.22	NS
Subcategory 200	2.81	5.75	2.29	NS
Subcategory 210	1.49	2.71	0.97	NS
Subcategory 230	20.02	28.18	1.97	NS
Subcategory 240	1.02	0.36	1.31	NS
Subcategory 260	2.66	0.56	4.97	*
Subcategory 300	1.60	1.04	0.27	NS
Subcategory 320	11.52	6.01	5.49	*
Subcategory 330	0.85	2.19	1.26	NS
Subcategory 340	0.85	0.00	5.33	*
Subcategory 350	0.59	0.35	0.32	NS
Subcategory 400	7.60	7.59	0.00	NS
Subcategory 410	2.59	2.95	0.12	NS
Subcategory 420	9.34	9.11	0.01	NS
Subcategory 430	2.07	2.22	0.02	NS
Subcategory 500	7.18	3.65	4.82	*

* $p < .05$

TABLE Q

RESPONSES TO "THE USE OF FORCE" BY ABILITY FOR GRADE 8: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	Superior (N=20)	Average (N=20)	F Ratio (df=1;38)	Prob.
Engagement	26.93	26.50	0.01	NS
Perception	35.02	31.17	0.97	NS
Interpretation	8.50	12.60	0.23	NS
Evaluation	22.74	24.51	0.10	NS
Miscellaneous	6.84	3.38	2.72	NS
Subcategory 110	3.07	1.46	1.18	NS
Subcategory 120	7.12	7.93	0.89	NS
Subcategory 130	15.96	15.97	0.00	NS
Subcategory 200	1.54	1.78	0.03	NS
Subcategory 210	1.32	4.03	1.82	NS
Subcategory 230	23.12	24.20	0.02	NS
Subcategory 240	1.65	0.71	0.75	NS
Subcategory 260	4.46	0.46	6.40	*
Subcategory 300	0.00	2.08	1.51	NS
Subcategory 320	6.24	7.51	0.20	NS
Subcategory 330	0.84	2.30	0.80	NS
Subcategory 340	0.65	0.00	2.03	NS
Subcategory 350	0.77	0.71	0.01	NS
Subcategory 400	6.80	7.24	0.04	NS
Subcategory 410	3.18	3.27	0.00	NS
Subcategory 420	10.66	12.19	0.12	NS
Subcategory 430	2.10	2.23	0.01	NS
Subcategory 500	6.84	3.81	1.72	NS

* $p < .05$

TABLE R

RESPONSES TO "CORNER" BY ABILITY FOR GRADE 8: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	Superior (N=20)	Average (N=20)	F Ratio (df=1;38)	Prob.
Engagement	22.75	26.48	0.31	NS
Perception	25.56	44.48	5.53	*
Interpretation	22.62	6.60	14.77	***
Evaluation	20.44	18.06	0.19	NS
Miscellaneous	7.52	3.92	2.10	NS
Subcategory 110	3.36	5.92	0.53	NS
Subcategory 120	4.09	3.13	0.21	NS
Subcategory 130	12.06	15.34	0.35	NS
Subcategory 200	4.09	9.72	2.76	NS
Subcategory 210	1.66	1.38	0.04	NS
Subcategory 230	16.92	32.17	3.53	NS
Subcategory 240	0.38	0.00	1.00	NS
Subcategory 260	0.86	0.66	0.05	NS
Subcategory 300	3.19	0.00	7.31	**
Subcategory 320	16.81	4.51	13.14	**
Subcategory 330	0.86	2.08	0.47	NS
Subcategory 340	1.05	0.00	3.20	NS
Subcategory 350	0.41	0.00	1.00	NS
Subcategory 400	8.39	7.95	0.02	NS
Subcategory 410	2.00	2.64	0.20	NS
Subcategory 420	8.00	6.03	0.41	NS
Subcategory 430	2.04	2.20	0.01	NS
Subcategory 500	7.52	3.92	2.10	NS

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

TABLE S

RESPONSES BY ABILITY TO THE STORY AND POEM COMBINED FOR GRADE 10: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	Superior (N=40)	Average (N=40)	F Ratio (df=1;78)	Prob.
Engagement	12.45	24.26	11.88	**
Perception	30.32	30.34	0.00	NS
Interpretation	36.49	26.99	3.45	NS
Evaluation	17.19	12.09	2.07	NS
Miscellaneous	3.57	6.23	2.57	NS
Subcategory 110	0.82	2.13	2.02	NS
Subcategory 120	0.76	1.80	1.51	NS
Subcategory 130	10.12	19.39	8.22	**
Subcategory 200	2.22	1.35	0.68	NS
Subcategory 210	3.13	1.10	4.29	*
Subcategory 230	19.53	23.52	0.68	NS
Subcategory 240	0.98	1.52	0.25	NS
Subcategory 260	3.18	1.19	3.01	NS
Subcategory 300	1.63	0.90	0.98	NS
Subcategory 320	18.38	20.85	0.63	NS
Subcategory 330	7.56	3.33	4.33	*
Subcategory 340	5.49	0.56	9.28	**
Subcategory 350	2.98	1.51	1.72	NS
Subcategory 400	4.70	4.78	0.00	NS
Subcategory 410	1.38	1.76	0.31	NS
Subcategory 420	7.08	4.25	2.05	NS
Subcategory 430	3.95	1.30	4.14	*
Subcategory 500	3.57	6.23	2.57	NS

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

TABLE T

RESPONSES TO "THE USE OF FORCE" BY ABILITY FOR GRADE 10: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	Superior (N=20)	Average (N=20)	F Ratio (df=1;38)	Prob.
Engagement	8.83	26.59	13.00	***
Perception	34.50	31.41	0.16	NS
Interpretation	34.96	22.44	4.08	*
Evaluation	16.91	13.95	0.36	NS
Miscellaneous	4.82	5.64	0.16	NS
Subcategory 110	0.00	2.72	3.56	NS
Subcategory 120	0.36	2.44	2.57	NS
Subcategory 130	8.05	20.52	6.49	*
Subcategory 200	3.47	0.00	4.50	*
Subcategory 210	3.91	1.00	3.36	NS
Subcategory 230	24.32	29.07	0.36	NS
Subcategory 240	1.04	0.47	0.67	NS
Subcategory 260	1.14	0.00	3.78	NS
Subcategory 300	0.78	0.69	0.02	NS
Subcategory 320	17.46	17.82	0.01	NS
Subcategory 330	8.60	1.85	6.12	*
Subcategory 340	3.76	0.00	6.34	*
Subcategory 350	3.92	2.69	0.44	NS
Subcategory 400	3.46	7.07	2.40	NS
Subcategory 410	1.12	2.32	1.73	NS
Subcategory 420	8.83	3.72	2.94	NS
Subcategory 430	3.49	0.84	3.38	NS
Subcategory 500	4.82	5.64	0.16	NS

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

TABLE U

RESPONSE TO "CORNER" BY ABILITY FOR GRADE 10: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

Cat./Subcategory	Mean Response %'s Superior (N=20)	Mean Response %'s Average (N=20)	F Ratio (df=1;38)	Prob.
Engagement	16.07	21.94	1.56	NS
Perception	26.15	29.47	0.30	NS
Interpretation	38.01	31.53	0.63	NS
Evaluation	17.46	10.23	1.95	NS
Miscellaneous	2.33	6.83	2.99	NS
Subcategory 110	1.65	1.55	0.01	NS
Subcategory 120	1.16	1.17	0.00	NS
Subcategory 130	12.20	18.27	2.01	NS
Subcategory 200	0.97	2.70	1.87	NS
Subcategory 210	2.35	1.19	0.98	NS
Subcategory 230	14.75	17.96	0.37	NS
Subcategory 240	0.92	2.56	0.63	NS
Subcategory 260	5.24	2.39	1.81	NS
Subcategory 300	2.48	1.11	1.05	NS
Subcategory 320	19.29	23.87	0.80	NS
Subcategory 330	6.52	4.82	0.32	NS
Subcategory 340	7.22	1.12	4.55	*
Subcategory 350	2.04	0.33	2.01	NS
Subcategory 400	5.92	2.48	2.04	NS
Subcategory 410	1.64	1.21	0.17	NS
Subcategory 420	5.32	4.79	0.04	NS
Subcategory 430	4.41	1.75	1.45	NS
Subcategory 500	2.33	6.83	2.99	NS

* $p < .05$

TABLE V

RESPONSES BY ABILITY TO THE STORY AND POEM COMBINED FOR GRADE 12: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	Superior (N=40)	Average (N=40)	F Ratio (df=1;78)	Prob.
Engagement	7.90	13.95	4.73	*
Perception	32.47	34.90	0.26	NS
Interpretation	33.03	34.61	0.12	NS
Evaluation	23.80	8.90	14.82	***
Miscellaneous	2.81	7.37	4.39	*
Subcategory 110	0.69	1.84	2.53	NS
Subcategory 120	1.10	2.02	1.38	NS
Subcategory 130	5.79	10.09	3.33	NS
Subcategory 200	0.11	0.50	2.03	NS
Subcategory 210	3.32	3.01	0.04	NS
Subcategory 230	14.95	21.10	2.71	NS
Subcategory 240	4.37	2.23	2.41	NS
Subcategory 260	4.15	3.87	0.03	NS
Subcategory 300	0.74	2.24	2.31	NS
Subcategory 320	15.64	16.50	0.10	NS
Subcategory 330	7.43	8.05	0.08	NS
Subcategory 340	6.31	5.64	0.14	NS
Subcategory 350	2.53	2.19	0.12	NS
Subcategory 400	4.70	1.76	4.91	*
Subcategory 410	2.07	0.79	2.72	NS
Subcategory 420	12.80	3.84	13.52	***
Subcategory 430	4.25	2.62	2.96	NS
Subcategory 500	2.81	7.37	4.39	*

* $p < .05$
*** $p < .001$

TABLE W

RESPONSES TO "THE USE OF FORCE" BY ABILITY FOR GRADE 12: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	Superior (N=20)	Average (N=20)	F Ratio (df=1;38)	Prob.
Engagement	8.05	16.55	4.11	*
Perception	30.66	28.09	0.19	NS
Interpretation	32.33	38.16	0.77	NS
Evaluation	26.52	9.52	8.03	**
Miscellaneous	2.73	8.27	2.70	NS
Subcategory 110	0.20	2.41	4.54	*
Subcategory 120	1.36	1.84	0.18	NS
Subcategory 130	6.01	12.29	3.29	NS
Subcategory 200	0.22	0.36	0.10	NS
Subcategory 210	2.86	1.18	1.61	NS
Subcategory 230	17.78	25.01	1.96	NS
Subcategory 240	3.11	0.76	5.65	*
Subcategory 260	2.60	0.70	4.14	*
Subcategory 300	0.36	2.61	2.09	NS
Subcategory 320	14.65	19.39	1.50	NS
Subcategory 330	5.62	8.44	1.31	NS
Subcategory 340	8.12	4.84	1.76	NS
Subcategory 350	3.59	2.89	0.18	NS
Subcategory 400	5.77	2.63	1.77	NS
Subcategory 410	2.66	1.59	0.67	NS
Subcategory 420	12.97	3.02	9.34	**
Subcategory 430	4.85	2.29	4.21	*
Subcategory 500	2.73	8.27	2.70	NS

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

TABLE X

RESPONSES TO "CORNER" BY ABILITY FOR GRADE 12: MEAN RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES

	Mean Response %'s			
Cat./Subcategory	Superior (N=20)	Average (N=20)	F Ratio (df=1;38)	Prob.
Engagement	7.75	11.36	0.97	NS
Perception	34.29	41.71	1.04	NS
Interpretation	33.72	31.07	0.16	NS
Evaluation	21.36	8.28	6.58	*
Miscellaneous	2.88	6.47	1.61	NS
Subcategory 110	1.19	1.27	0.01	NS
Subcategory 120	0.85	2.20	1.55	NS
Subcategory 130	5.57	7.88	0.52	NS
Subcategory 200	0.00	0.65	3.35	NS
Subcategory 210	3.77	4.85	0.15	NS
Subcategory 230	12.13	17.18	0.91	NS
Subcategory 240	5.65	3.71	0.58	NS
Subcategory 260	5.63	7.05	0.26	NS
Subcategory 300	1.13	1.86	0.34	NS
Subcategory 320	16.63	13.60	0.59	NS
Subcategory 330	9.25	7.65	0.21	NS
Subcategory 340	4.49	6.45	0.63	NS
Subcategory 350	1.47	1.50	0.00	NS
Subcategory 400	3.63	0.89	5.10	*
Subcategory 410	1.47	0.00	3.38	NS
Subcategory 420	12.63	4.67	4.64	*
Subcategory 430	3.65	2.95	0.24	NS
Subcategory 500	2.88	6.47	1.61	NS

* $p \leq .05$

APPENDIX C

RESPONSE PREFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTION SHEET

INTRODUCTION: When you write or talk about literature, you are probably likely to consider different kinds of questions. Some of these questions may be more important than others depending on:

(1) the TYPE of literature you are writing or talking about, or;

(2) whether you are talking or writing in SCHOOL or in the company of your FRIENDS.

I am interested in whether you think:

(1) IN SCHOOL, the questions you would consider important to ask about SHORT STORIES are different from the questions you would ask about POEMS, and;

(2) whether, WITH YOUR FRIENDS, the questions you would consider important about any type of literature are different from the questions you would consider IN SCHOOL.

DIRECTIONS: Read the list of questions on the attached sheet and then complete the THREE columns on the answer sheet. Use the numbers (100-430) beside the questions to make your rankings.

FIRST - choose the TEN (10) questions you think are the most important to ask about SHORT STORIES IN SCHOOL, and the FIVE (5) you think are of little importance.

SECOND - choose the TEN (10) questions you think are the most important to ask about POEMS IN SCHOOL, and the FIVE (5) you think are of little importance.

THIRD - choose the TEN (10) questions you think are the most important to consider when discussing ANY LITERATURE WITH YOUR FRIENDS, and the FIVE (5) you think are of little importance.

N.B. There are 23 questions altogether, so there are EIGHT (8) questions you will leave out in each of the three columns.

QUESTIONS WHICH MIGHT BE ASKED ABOUT A STORY/POEM/LITERATURE IN GENERAL

N.B. See the instructions for method of filling in the three columns on the answer sheet.

100: How did I *feel* after reading the story/poem/literature in general?

110: Is this a *proper subject* for a story/poem/literature in general?

120: What *emotions* did the story/poem/literature in general arouse in me?

130: Are any of the characters, events, etc., in the story/poem/literature in general *like those I know or have experienced*?

200: Are there any particular features of the story/poem/literature in general *which I don't understand*?

210: Has the writer used *words or sentences* in the story/poem/literature in general *differently from* the way people usually write?

220: What kinds of *metaphors*, *images* or other *writer's devices* are used in the story/poem/literature in general?

230: What *happens* in the story/poem/literature in general?

240: How is the *way* the story/poem/literature in general *is written related to what it is about*?

250: How does the story/poem/literature in general *build up*? How is it *organized*?

260: What is the *atmosphere*, *mood* or *point of view* of the story/poem/literature in general?

270: What *type* of story/poem/literature is it? Is it *like any other* I have read or studied?

280: When was it written? What is the historical background of the story/poem/literature in general? Does the author's nationality tell me anything?

300: What does the story/poem/literature in general mean?

310: Is there anything in the story/poem/literature in general that has a hidden meaning?

320: How can we explain the way the characters behave in the story/poem/literature?

330: What does the story/poem/literature tell us about people or experiences I know about?

340: Does the story/poem/literature tell us anything about people or ideas in general?

350: What is the moral of the story/poem/piece of literature?

400: Is the story/poem/literature "good"?

410: Does the story/poem/literature succeed in getting me involved?

420: Is the story/poem/literature well written?

430: Is the story/poem/literature about important things? Is the topic trivial or serious?

ANSWER SHEET FOR LITERATURE PREFERENCES

NAME:

SCHOOL:

GRADE:

SHORT STORIES IN SCHOOL	POEMS IN SCHOOL	ANY LITERATURE WITH YOUR FRIENDS
MOST IMP. 1. ____	MOST IMP. 1. ____	MOST IMP. 1. ____
2. ____	2. ____	2. ____
3. ____	3. ____	3. ____
4. ____	4. ____	4. ____
5. ____	5. ____	5. ____
6. ____	6. ____	6. ____
7. ____	7. ____	7. ____
8. ____	8. ____	8. ____
9. ____	9. ____	9. ____
LEAST IMP.10. ____	LEAST IMP. 10. ____	10. ____
VERY LITTLE IMPORTANCE	VERY LITTLE IMPORTANCE	VERY LITTLE IMPORTANCE
1. ____	1. ____	1. ____
2. ____	2. ____	2. ____
3. ____	3. ____	3. ____
4. ____	4. ____	4. ____
5. ____	5. ____	5. ____

APPENDIX D

NAEP SCORING GUIDE

I. Engagement-Involvement: What effect does the work have on me as an individual?

Does the student find the work believable, are the characters good or bad, do they remind him of people he knows or the situations he has observed in life? Does he question the actions of characters as if they were real, insist that they should do this or that? Does the student like the work? What sort of mood did it put him into? Is the response predominantly personal and subjective? The student might talk of his prejudices, his emotions, his thoughts, whatever.

Scoring: Inadequate -- hardly articulated response ("I don't like it")

Barely adequate -- describes the effect the work had on him without searching for the cause; or a vague description of student's mood upon finishing the work.

Adequate -- statement of the effect the work had on student and a statement of the cause; vivid description of student's mood upon finishing the work; lively personal discussion.

Superior -- effect the work had on student, clear statement of the cause; interesting and relevant personal discussion of the work or aspects of the work.

II. Perception: What is the nature of the work?

Description of the language, style or form of the work, a discussion of literary devices (metaphor, personification, etc.) in it, of its point of view or structure. Or a treatment of the work as a part of literary history; other academic discussions.

Scoring: Inadequate -- factually incorrect, radically incomplete.

Barely adequate -- a few, undeveloped formal statements.

Adequate -- developed formal statements, not related to one another or related vaguely.

Superior -- formal statements which rise above a mere catalogue of parts, describe several of the work's facets accurately, are perhaps organized to account for an over-riding hypothesis about the work.

Retelling and paraphrase:

Inadequate -- factually incorrect or radically incomplete responses.

Barely adequate -- correct but brief, neglecting important details.

Adequate -- correct paraphrase covering major points.

Superior -- correct and comprehensive paraphrase.

III. Interpretation: What does the work mean?

What do the character's actions mean in relation to a universe of values outside of the work? What is the author's intention in writing the work? What is the moral? Any general response the intention of which seems clearly to be interpretive.

Scoring: Inadequate -- student attempts to, but cannot, formulate an interpretation: "I don't understand."

Barely adequate -- unverifiable or unverified hypothesis about the meaning of the work.

Adequate -- student presents a hypothesis that accounts for the text and is somewhat verifiable.

Superior -- a fully stated and supported hypothesis that accounts for most of the details in the text.

IV. Evaluation: Is the work a good work of art?

Is the work well-written? Was it effective in amusing or moving the reader? Was it sincere or imaginative? Did it deal with a serious matter? Is it worth reading?

Scoring: Inadequate -- student says only that the work is good or bad.

Barely adequate -- a weak statement of the criterion for the judgment and a weak statement of the measure of the work against the criterion.

Adequate -- a clear formulation of criteria and an adequate measure of the work against them; appropriate criteria, relevant to the work.

Superior -- statement which formulates the criteria of judgment well and measures the work against them with supporting details.

V. Catch-all: for unusual or unclassifiable responses -- too many categories in statement, so that no clear intent emerges; totally unrelated digression; quote from the work, and no other comment; "I don't know."; fragment.